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CHINESE NOVELS,

&c. &c.

CHINESE NOVELS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINALS;

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

PROVERBS AND MORAL MAXIMS,

COLLECTED FROM

THEIR CLASSICAL BOOKS AND OTHER SOURCES.

THE WHOLE PREFACED BY

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE OF CHINA.

By JOHN FRANCIS DAVIS, F.R.S.

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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

OF

CHINA.

Amidst the general progress which has been made by our countrymen in knowledge, their advancement in subjects connected with the Chinese empire, and its literature, has been very inconsiderable. One is at a loss to account for the almost total ignorance, which previous to the embassy of Lord Macartney prevailed in this country, respecting a people with whom we carried on such large dealings, while the French, for nearly a century before,

had been prosecuting their researches with diligence and success. It is not easy to explain this singular listlessness, by saying that the subject was devoid of interest, for whether we consider the extraordinary nature of the government of China, or the no less extraordinary structure of its language, it would seem that it had been necessary only to know that "such things were," in order to produce much industry in their investigation.

Those of our own nation, from whom the first information on these subjects was to have been expected, were, without doubt, the agents employed by us to superintend our affairs in China. Were it under no other consideration than that of policy, that these persons had regarded the literature of that empire as deserving of notice, this consideration alone, when we remember the magnitude of the commercial rela-

tions, which as long ago as the middle of the last century subsisted between the two countries, would seem sufficient to have given it an interest, fully adequate to induce research. But either the fancied, or the real difficulties of the language, or both together, effectually prevented its acquisition; besides which, the Chinese themselves were disposed to throw discouragements in the way. As it was necessary, however, that one of the parties at least should understand sufficient of the language of the other, to facilitate their mutual intercourse, the Chinese were content to acquire as many words of English, as would barely serve the purposes of commerce; and thus by degrees arose that base and disgusting jargon, which still continues to be spoken and understood at Canton. This, which was at first a consequence of our general ignorance of their tongue, is now the great

cause that tends to perpetuate it; for most persons find it more convenient to avail themselves of such an imperfect and confined medium, than put themselves to the trouble of acquiring the language of the country. The natives themselves hand it down from generation to generation in a printed vocabulary, wherein the sounds of our words are imitated, as nearly as they can contrive it, by their own characters.

Thus it was that little or no addition was made for years to our general stock of information regarding China; and until the embassy of Lord Macartney, an imperfect translation of a novel was the only specimen of Chinese literature for which we had to thank our own countrymen. That embassy, however, had its full effect in clearing away much of the obscurity which involved the subject, not only immediately, through the personal observations of those

who composed it, but also by its more remote tendency to awaken a general curiosity, and a desire to know something concerning so singular a people. It is to the embassy, perhaps, that we may consider ourselves indebted for that valuable translation of the Penal Code of China, whose author has an undisputed claim to the honour of being the first Englishman, who ever gave to his country a genuine specimen of the most interesting province of Chinese literature.

The first thing needful in our inquiries was to divest the picture of all that false colouring, which had been so plentifully bestowed on it by the Romish missionaries, who for certain good reasons, stated by Sir Geo. Staunton in his elegant preface to the Penal Code, modified their most authentic accounts of China in such a way, as tended rather to mislead, than to inform; and it

remained for the English to give the first correct account of a nation, whom they discovered to be neither perfectly wise, nor perfectly virtuous, but who were occasionally reduced to the necessity of *flogging* integrity into their magistrates, and valour into their generals.

If, however, the particular situation and prejudices of the Jesuits occasioned the information, which they transmitted to Europe, to be on some points both scanty and unfaithful, they must still have their due praise for being the first who told us any thing on the subject. We seem, indeed, to be particularly indebted, for our knowledge of China, to that zeal for spreading Christianity through the world, which has prompted so many to devote their lives to the cause; and it must be allowed, that to men who have such a purpose in view, there is at first sight something peculiarly

encouraging in the character of the Chinese. The bulk of the people have all that ignorance of devoted attachment to old, and that indifference with regard to the introduction of new, religious doctrines, which usually attends a spirit of Polytheism, where the priesthood have little influence.* The general depravation of their moral character may be attributed to their total want of any thing like religious feeling. If it were left to their own choice, they would probably adopt the mere outward forms of Christianity with as much readiness, as the Romans enlisted the German deities among the gods of the Republic; and the rapidity with which the missionaries advanced, as long as they were unmolested by the government (though *they*, of

* In *India*, the Priesthood have the greatest influence, and their jealousy is unbounded.

course, made the total abandonment of old superstitions a sine quâ non,) afforded abundant proof of this. At the same time, the acquisition of such blind and ignorant converts could hardly be considered as a gain to the cause of Christianity. When, however, the jealousy of the ruling power was once excited, the 十字教 or "Religion of the Cross," experienced the same persecution in the Chinese empire, that it had formerly met with in that of Rome; and was prohibited among the unlawful doctrines. There is the following mention of it in the seventh section of the Shing-yu, a book composed by the Emperor Yung-ching for the instruction of the people.

又如西洋教宗天主亦屬不經
因其人通曉曆數故國家用之

"The religion of the Western ocean, which reverences the Tien-chu, or Lord of Heaven, also appertains to the number of those

which are not to be found in the ancient books; but as its followers are thoroughly acquainted with astronomical science, the government on that account employs them." The late unsettled state of the empire has greatly added to the rigour of the prohibitions against introducing Christianity, and it may be questioned whether any success would just now attend a violation of them. Several catholic priests have recently obtained the crown of martyrdom in the interior, and lost their heads in their zeal to make proselytes.

But to return to our subject. One of the most effectual means of gaining an intimate knowledge of China, is by translations from its popular literature, consisting principally of drama and novels. With reference to the former, the writer of this perfectly coincides in opinion with Sir G. Staunton, that "the dramatic works of the

Chinese are certainly less calculated, on the whole, than their novels, to reward the labour of the translator. Too local and national to please as mere compositions; and their minute beauties of style and language necessarily in great measure lost in the translation, the remaining sources of interest are but slender. The dramatic dialogue drily rendered, and unaided by the talents of the actor, can convey, generally speaking, no more than a very imperfect outline of that interesting picture of life and manners, which, in their novels and romances, is filled up in its minutest details."

It was with a similar partiality in favour of the latter species of composition, that the tales, contained in the present volume, were translated. Of the first of these, "The Shadow in the Water," it may be observed, that the principal incident, whence it derives its name, is pretty and natural, and

that, in the conduct of the different persons, there is just what might be expected from human nature, in that particular state of society. Although the circumstance of the hero espousing two wives may certainly appear strange and uncouth to European readers, yet, as is justly observed in the Quarterly Review, "in the translations of foreign novels, it is information that is sought, and not a correspondency of feeling." Those very incidents constitute, as objects of curiosity, the chief value of such translations.

The most remarkable circumstance in the second novel, "The Twin Sisters," (though there again, the hero espouses two wives,) is the power, which the distributor of public justice seems to possess, of interfering in domestic matters of the first importance. However consistent such a power may be with Chinese notions of policy, it must cer-

tainly appear to us strangely ill calculated to promote the happiness of society.

The third and last tale was translated some years ago, and a very few copies were printed in China, under the title of the "Three dedicated Rooms." It has also made its appearance, in fragments, through the medium of a periodical journal. The translator has always thought that in this, his first effort, he adhered too strictly to the Chinese idiom, and that a less verbal rendering would not only make it more agreeable to the English reader, but also convey far better the spirit of the original. He has therefore subjected it to a complete revisal. As a picture of manners and opinions it is fully equal, if not superior, to the two which precede it.

The Tales are succeeded by a collection of Proverbs and Moral Maxims, which were selected, (as the best, with regard either to

originality or point,) from a variety of sources. Judging of these by the European standard, they deserve but little attention in the abstract, and indeed their only claim to notice rests on their intimate connexion with national manners and ways of thinking. They cannot pretend to much novelty as ethical discoveries, for the day has long been passed (if it ever was) when Europe could have looked to the Chinese for instruction in moral science. The most surprising feature of such translations, from the languages of remote nations, consists occasionally in the curious resemblance, as well of the maxims themselves, as of the modes of illustrating them, to what we meet with nearer home; a resemblance which is only to be accounted for, by the identity of human nature every where, as well as the similarity of situation, in which mankind all over the world are placed, in respect to

the motives and consequences of their moral actions.

If it be true, that "the excellence of aphorisms consists, not so much in the expression of some rare or abstruse sentiment, as in the comprehension of some obvious and useful truth in a few words," the language of the Chinese may be considered as admirably fitted for being manufactured into proverbs. It possesses from its peculiar structure a brevity and pointedness of expression, which no degree of care or pains can convey into a Translation, and which those only can feel who understand the original. A great deal of the beauty of a sentence arises often from the selection of the words, or from their mere collocation; and if the influence of such apparent trifles be allowed in a syllabic language, how much more in one which speaks, as the Chinese does, to the eye.

Of some particular notions contained in the following collection, it will readily be perceived that they are absurdly erroneous; and of others, that they are altogether repugnant to our ideas of religion, and of the administration of the universe. Indeed the government itself of China preaches to the people nothing better than a system of the most gross atheism; and though it certainly *tolerates* the superstitions of Fo, and of Taou, (as a means, perhaps, of amusing, and engaging the attention of its subjects,) the tenets of those superstitions are stigmatized among the "impure doctrines," against the belief of which the nation is warned to guard itself, with especial caution, no less than against the belief of Christianity.

The most popular modern work on practical morality, among the Chinese, is the Shing-yu.* In it the maxims of their an-

* Lately translated by the Rev. Mr. Milne of Malacca.

cient sages are inculcated and explained, in subservience to the views of a despotic government; and it is a lasting monument, not only of the literary abilities, but also of the political sagacity of its author, the third Emperor of the present Tartar dynasty. To derive the obligations of obedience to the government, and observance of the laws, from their own national works on policy and ethics, was the means best calculated to secure the submission of the Chinese to a dominion, which had so recently been imposed on them by conquest, and to a yoke, which to this day, perhaps, has not ceased entirely to gall them. As the government of a family is well known to be the prototype of political rule among this people, the principles of parental authority, and of filial submission, are, as might be expected, carried to a most extravagant length in the above work; and the duties on the one hand

are exacted, without any provision as to a reciprocation on the other. It certainly is at first natural to suppose, that independently of that *instinctive* affection, or στοργη, universally implanted in living creatures towards their offspring, (and which in brutes ceases with the necessity for its exertion,) that *acquired* love, which springs from the consciousness of securing affection by conferring benefits, would be a sufficient pledge for the performance of parental duties. But it would seem, in China, that the most endearing of human relations is not always a security against domestic tyranny, and the abuse of unlimited power; and this perhaps is aggravated, by the dominion not ceasing at a certain period, but continuing during the life of the parent. It might be some check to the caprice of cruelty to think, that a day must come, when the law would no longer be its abettor, and when that sub-

mission, which was now exacted by authority, could only be looked for from gratitude.

The Chinese, though possessing a vague notion of a future state, in their doctrine of the transmigration of souls, and though they have in their language such an expression as "the Life to come," seem to be little influenced, as to their moral conduct, by the hope of future rewards, or the dread of future punishments. In the inculcation of their maxims, their Moralists appear to hope for proselytes, rather by pointing out the temporal and immediate profitableness of virtue, than by drawing the attention of their disciples so far as to a future state of existence. This, indeed, is to be expected among a people, whose moral precepts derive none of their force from the dictates of Religion; for where such sanctions do not present themselves, temporal self-interest must be resorted to, as the primum mobile.

The idolatrous superstitions of the Chinese have little or no connexion with their morality, and indeed the ignorant and brutish character of the Priesthood would seem fully to entitle it to the contempt which it meets with from the mass of the people. The festivals and forms of their worship are made almost entirely subservient to purposes of show, and of public amusement, and a theatre is in most cases erected opposite to a temple. Some of the rites, performed on such occasions, would not have disgraced the votaries of Cotytto.*

Their Paganism has not been improved by them, since they received it from their western neighbours. The Greek and Roman mythology, if it was good for nothing else, formed the subject of their

* Inultus ut tu riseris Cotyttia
Vulgata, sacrum liberi Cupidinis?—*Hor.*

finest poetry, painting, and sculpture; and Lord Bacon calls it, "a soft whisper, from the Traditions of more ancient nations, conveyed through the flutes of the Grecians," who possessed a wonderful power of giving a mould of elegance and grace to whatever passed through their hands. Chinese taste, on the contrary, is what most of us would pronounce vile and unseemly. It is regulated by principles diametrically opposite: for, with them, distortion is preferred to symmetry, and the tricks of art to the graces of nature; witness their small-footed women, their fat josses, their stunted garden plants—and a tremendous et cetera of monsters.

The writer proceeds to conclude these general observations, by an examination of the aids, which have recently been afforded to the attainment of the Chinese language. Until very lately, the chief obstacle to this

study has been the want of a good dictionary. In the Chinese and Latin dictionaries of the Jesuits, the characters, or words, are certainly well selected, and consist of such as are in most common use. At the same time, these compilations are incomplete, as may be proved by the experience of any one who has had frequently to consult them. The few phrases and quotations, too, which are there inserted, from merely the sounds of the characters being written down in European orthography, instead of the characters themselves, are rendered almost useless, until the student has attained a considerable degree of proficiency. These dictionaries have also been very scarce and expensive, as they were entirely manuscript, until M. de Guignes published his printed copy in France. His work is extremely well executed, and the characters, which were prepared by Fourmont more than half a cen-

tury ago, distinctly and neatly cut. M. de Guignes has done very little more, however, than to compile into one volume the contents of all the manuscript dictionaries which he could collect together, and as far as he has adhered strictly to them, his labours have been highly useful. A mistake, at the end of the Introduction, concerning 乾隆大皇帝 proves that he was liable to error when he trusted to his own resources.

It is not at first, perhaps, very easy to decide, what plan of a Chinese dictionary is the most desirable; but the project of a mere Translation of that of Kang-hy would be quite absurd. At the same time, the idea of a complete dictionary seems to require, that almost all the characters or words, contained in that national work of China, should be inserted. In their ancient Books, great numbers of words may be found, which are now obsolete, or which

exist no where except in those Books: but yet it seems necessary that these should be noticed in a dictionary of the language. The Chinese value themselves not a little on the mere antiquity of their literature, and are disposed to look down with great contempt on the learning of all other nations. They have some books, such as the Yĕ-king, which are not now intelligible, without a verbal comment, to natives themselves. If that may be applied to a nation which is told of an individual, they may be compared to the man who wept in his old age, because he could not comprehend the productions of his youth: but if we should be inclined to laugh at them on this score, they may still assume grounds of superiority over us, with as much right, at least, as he who proudly said to his audience, "Gentlemen, I have forgotten more than you ever knew!" A student of Chinese should be somewhat

acquainted with these Books, because there are frequent allusions to them in modern writings: but to confine himself exclusively to them appears to be a downright loss of time. There are many excellent works of a later date, which may not only serve as better models of the style of the present day, but likewise convey far more information with regard to the present state of the Empire, and the character of the people; and, as has been before observed, multitudes of amusing Dramas and Novels, from which may be selected much curious matter. What we now want is a little practical knowledge of Chinese Literature, instead of speculative dissertations on the nature of the language.

That great desideratum, a complete Chinese dictionary, is at length in progress. In 1814, the Court of Directors of the East India Company, with their wonted liberality, supplied Dr. Morrison at Canton

with every facility for carrying on this most desirable work. The Imperial Dictionary of Kang-hy forms its groundwork, and it contains every word to be found in the body of that great compilation. Instead, however, of being a mere translation of the same, a plan equally useless and absurd, with a reference to the use of the European student, this dictionary comprises, not only the definition of each word as given in Kang-hy and other dictionaries, but also quotations, in the Chinese character, from all the best ancient and modern works: as well as colloquial phrases, showing the sense of the more common words, as adopted in conversation. The first, and most voluminous part, consists of the Chinese words *first*, according to their arrangement in Kang-hy, under the roots. In the second part (which is now completed) they likewise precede the English, but the arrange-

ment is different, being according to their pronunciation in the European alphabetic system. The third, and last part, will be English and Chinese.

In conveying the sounds of the characters, or words, one could have wished that Dr. Morrison had retained the old system of the Jesuits, or as Fourmont calls it, the "Lusitanam, id est, receptam apud omnes pronunciationem." With all its defects, this system had the advantage of being generally understood by those who had turned their attention to Chinese subjects. But after all, this is a matter of secondary importance; for by attending to the short rules at the commencement, for pronouncing the characters, all difficulty is done away. What seems to be particularly deserving of notice, next to the learning and industry displayed in the work itself, is the excellence of the Chinese metal types—the

beauty of the principal characters, and the clearness and accuracy of the smaller ones employed in the illustrative phrases. The dictionary of Dr. Morrison has a powerful claim on the attention, not only of those who have a particular interest in the subject, but likewise of all such as possess minds sufficiently enlarged to feel a gratification in the advancement of literature and knowledge in general.

Another work of importance on the language of China, is the Clavis Sinica, or Chinese grammar of Dr. Marshman, published in Bengal in 1814. As the Preliminary Dissertation to the work involves some questions, on which the writer of this has a little to remark, it may be as well to consider it separately in the first place, and then to proceed to the grammar.

The dissertation commences with observations on the characters, and Dr. Marsh-

man very justly says, "The specific difference between the Chinese, and other languages, lies wholly in the *principle* on which the characters or words are formed; these being formed in the latter by the union of the letters of the alphabet; in the former, by the union of certain elementary characters, intended to represent the principal objects of sense." These elements he calls *formatives*, but proceeds, a little farther on, to mention certain other characters, which he denominates *primitives*, but of which, as far as the writer knows, the Chinese have no idea whatever.

A considerable portion of the dissertation, which treats of the origin of the characters and the progress of the language, was published in a former work of Dr. Marshman.* He mentions in it the six well known divi-

* The Lun-gnee.

sions of the characters by the Chinese; but appears to be under some mistake throughout, in thinking that the language was constructed in pursuance of some pre-concerted plan, of which these six classes formed the groundwork; whereas the fact seems to be, that the classes themselves were instituted, long after the language had been already formed, with a view to arrangement and order.

Next comes the above-mentioned system of *primitives*, concerning which Dr. Marshman observes, "The way in which this simplifies the language is too apparent to need pointing out." This, however, is a discovery which the Chinese scholars have not yet made in their own native tongue, and appears to the writer an innovation on an ancient and highly cultivated language, which (allowing that there were any foundation for it) is by no means calcu-

lated to facilitate its acquisition. Let us proceed, however, to examine the grounds on which our author builds the reality and importance of his discovery.

He says he long suspected the existence of Primitives, "" which, like the Greek Primitives, and the Sungskrit Dhatoos, form the bulk of the language by associating to themselves certain of the elements." He adds, that he observed in a manuscript Latin-Chinese (probably meaning to say Chinese-Latin) dictionary, which classed the characters according to their names, that in numerous instances one character was the root of ten or twelve others, each of which was formed from it by the addition of a *single element.*" Now one would have supposed that this single element, as our author calls it, was *itself* the root, or radical part of the character, and it is cer-

tain that the Chinese have this idea.* Dr. Marshman observed farther, that "the character thus formed generally took the name of the Primitive with some slight variation." If he means to say, that the portion of a character which is added to the root, (and which is generally to the *right*, as the root is generally to the *left*,) often gives its *sound* to the character which it contributes to form, he is indisputably right. An instance may be given in the word 河 ho "a river," which the Chinese themselves produce as a specimen of that class of characters, (one of the *six* above-mentioned) which they denominate 諧聲 "corresponding in sound." Here the root, which is 氵 "water," evidently imparts its *meaning* to the compound, and 可 kho (which uncompounded is simply a particle) its *sound*. Noting this

* In writing the same character variously, they never alter the root, but frequently the other parts.

circumstance, as far as it sometimes enables one to form a near guess at the sound of a character, is occasionally useful; but even in this respect it is very fallacious, being by no means a general rule. For instance, in the common word 讀 *tŏh* "to read," (root 言 "a word") what resemblance is there between *its* sound, and that of 賣 *mae*, which Dr. Marshman would call its Primitive? In another common word 愛 *gae*, "to love," (of which the root 心 "heart" is in the middle) where is the resemblance between its sound, and the sound of its primitive, even if Dr. Marshman can show that it has *any* primitive, according to his own system?

Not satisfied, however, that these primitives shall merely give their *sounds* to the characters of the Chinese language, our author endeavours to prove that they impart their *meaning* also. Now though the

writer of this is sensible that the other component parts are *sometimes* combined with the root in giving its meaning to a character, he must enter his protest against this as a general rule. One of the principal proofs which Dr. Marshman has brought forward in favour of his position, is a list of compounds, which, in addition to their proper roots, have the character 艹 in their composition. He observes, "in perhaps the greater part of these, were the idea suggested by the primitive, (that of something current or freely flowing,) added to their various formatives, the meaning of the derivative would be nearly indicated; as a man living *freely* may suggest the idea of a prodigal; a tree's *flourishing*, that of a leaf; a *flowing* mouth, that of verbosity," &c. To say nothing of the manner in which the sense of the words is here distorted, it is quite certain that 艹 does *not*

mean "something current or freely flowing," but a *generation*, or an *age of* 30 *years*, being originally derived from 十 "ten," thrice repeated, though classed in the Imperial Dictionary under 一 "one." Other instances are produced equally inconclusive, and in particular a list of words in which 我 "I myself," is a component part. Dr. Marshman thinks that "the general idea suggested by this primitive seems to be, that partial preference which the human mind naturally feels for itself, its own exertions, its own property," &c. though he is obliged to acknowledge that in many cases "the chain of connexion is scarcely discernible."

The second part of the dissertation is on the *sounds* of the language, or the colloquial medium, in contradistinction to the *characters*. Dr. Marshman, perhaps, takes unnecessary pains to prove that this part of the

language existed previously to the invention of the characters, since nations, as well as individuals, must obviously talk before they can write. He likewise observes, that it is not likely the compilers of the Imperial Dictionary should have introduced into the language, and given "as the true pronunciation of characters well known throughout the Empire, sounds never before heard by a Chinese ear." This, indeed, is evident: they merely gave what they thought to be an improved method of expressing sounds which already existed. He then proceeds to lay down in detail the tables of initials and finals, as they are found in the first volume of the Imperial Dictionary; as well as those wherein the said initials and finals are combined, to form all the monosyllables in the language.

It certainly is an extraordinary fact that the Chinese should ever have adopted such

a roundabout method of expressing the sounds of their monosyllabic characters, as this of giving *two*, in order to enable the student to get at the sound of a *third;* when they had previously been accustomed to the much more obvious and simple plan of adducing a single character, of exactly the same sound as the one to be explained. Besides, one is naturally inclined to ask where they could have got a system of syllabic spelling, of which nearly one third is evidently redundant; a system, too, so anomalous to the general character and genius of the language, as to be scarcely understood at this day by numbers of well educated Chinese. That the Chinese did not invent it themselves might at any time have been considered as morally certain; but from which of the neighbouring countries, or when they got it, has not hitherto been quite so clear. Dr. Morrison, in the

Introduction to his Dictionary, seems now to have answered both these questions in a manner perfectly satisfactory, and the following is a short abstract of the interesting information which he gives on the subject, the whole of it derived from original Chinese works, and substantiated by quotations.

These works say, that the 聲韻反切之學 "The system of the tones and that of the syllabic spelling," were not known to the 漢儒 or literati of the Dynasty of Han. The mode of distinguishing the four tones was first brought into general notice about the fifth century of our era, in a work published by a man named 沈約. The syllabic spelling, or the system of initials and finals, was derived from the country 梵 *Fan*, in the west, whence came the religion of Fŏ or Buddha, and was at first employed 以通釋氏之書於中國

" to give currency to the books of Fŏ in China." It was not however received into general use until the times of Tsy and Leang, or about the fifth century; the tables of sounds, as given in Kang-hy, being introduced by 神琪 a priest of Fŏ.

After this, there can no longer be a doubt that the Sanscrit was the language from which the Chinese initials and finals were derived, though the system is probably indebted, for its general adoption in the more modern dictionaries, to the countenance and partiality of the Tartar emperors, who, from the nature of their own syllabic spelling, were much better able to understand its application than their Chinese subjects. Dr. Morrison remarks very justly that " what is said in the dictionary 字彙 respecting the system, is still the language of the Chinese. Its rules are numerous and embarrassing, and its meaning

obscure. Every one is afraid of the difficulty, and rejects it, saying—'of what use will this be to me in the pursuit of literary honours?'"

Dr. Marshman soon discovers that the system of initials and finals bears "a very surprising likeness to the sounds of the Sungskrit alphabet;" and is led by this similarity to question, "Did the Sungskrit system give birth to the Chinese colloquial medium, or did that, on the other hand, give birth to the Sungskrit alphabetic system; or did they originate independently of each other?" In his discussion of these questions, it is difficult sometimes to discover his meaning; for by the "Chinese colloquial medium" and "colloquial system," he seems at one time to designate the spoken language itself, and at another the mode of representing the sounds of that language. After all, however, he does not

come to any decisive conclusion; though it is probable that having read Dr. Morrison's Introduction, he will by this time have been satisfactorily assured on the subject.

The above observations are what chiefly occurred to the writer in his perusal of Dr. Marshman's Preliminary Dissertation. He shall conclude his remarks by a brief consideration of the Grammar. With respect to the general plan of the work, it is much to be regretted that Dr. Marshman should have adopted the measure of confining his observations and examples almost exclusively to the ancient books, and thus have rendered his work incomplete by neglecting the modern language of China. It is fair, however, to state his own reasons for so doing. Although he mentions Fourmont's Grammar among the sources whence he derived his information, he observes that

Fourmont's "supporting the grammatical positions which he has laid down, by sentences formed by himself, has greatly injured his work. Had he allowed himself to examine the best Chinese works for authorities, and stopped where he found himself unsupported by these, he would have obtained a far more accurate idea of the language, and would have added exceedingly to the value of his work."

Was Dr. Marshman not aware that Fourmont merely compiled the materials which were sent to him by the French missionaries, and that he himself knew little or nothing of Chinese?* The colloquial ex-

* When Fourmont received from Father Premare his Translation of the Orphan of Chaou, it was accompanied by the following dispensation from acknowledgment. "Si vous le jugiez digne de paroître, vous pourriez le faire imprimer sous votre nom, sans craindre qu'on vous accuse de larcin; puisque entre amis tout est commun, puisque je vous le donne, et puisque vous y aurez la

amples were not made by him, but by the missionaries, and *they* surely were sufficiently good judges of correct Chinese. In fact, the only errors in Fourmont's grammar consist, not in the phraseology of the examples, for they are correct enough, but in the insertion, in many instances, of one character for another of the same sound, a mistake the most likely to be made by a man who did not understand the language. Dr. Marshman afterwards says—"if *con-*

meilleure part, si vous vous donnez la peine de le revoir." Three excellent reasons, indeed!—It is worth while to give what Fourmont himself adds, after he has quoted this portion of his obliging friend's letter, as it seems, to prove that Du Halde acted rather dishonestly in publishing the Orphan of Chaou in his own compilation respecting China, "Timuitne hoc Duhaldius? Scilicet, epistolâ subdolè interceptâ, Librum suum hâcce meâ, et ad me destinatâ Tragico-comediâ, ornare non dubitavit. Atqui eam, si à me petiisset, dedissem ultro: et si me de linguâ Sinicâ interrogâsset, monuissem quoque, neque imaginariis, ac omninò falsis notis, pulchrum illud et nobile volumen conspurcari essem passus."

versation differ from the style and idiom of the best writers, these variations *are not the language;* they may be given as colloquial idioms, but they can have no place in a work which professes to embrace the *whole* of the language." According to this, then, the way to embrace the *whole* of the language is to give only a *part* of it.—In page 477 of his grammar, after having given an example of a modern phrase, Dr. Marshman adds—"such a combination of characters might be sought for in vain either in Confucius or Mung." Why then has he confined his examples exclusively to quotations from them, and one or two more, the language of whom is now so ancient, as sometimes to require a verbal comment to make it intelligible to native Chinese? In consequence of his indifference for the modern language of China, he has omitted such phrases as 了不得, a

superlative adverb, signifying "extremely, very," and 差不多 "about, about so much," used as an expression of doubt or uncertainty. These are phrases which are constantly occurring both in conversation and in books, phrases so perfectly idiomatic, that it is not easy to translate them literally, and which it is the business of a grammar, therefore, to put down and explain.

The following are some of the mis-translations of Chinese sentences, and other slight errors, which occur among the examples given in the grammar.

On the subject of comparison (p. 279.) Dr. Marshman quotes this sentence from the Lee-Khee 其受罪益寡 and translates it thus: "He continually regards his own defects with less indulgence." He seems here to have mistaken the sense of the passage, which might have been rendered almost verbatim by, "He incurs

faults more rarely." It would still have answered his purpose as an example of comparison.

In giving the following quotation from the Lun-yu, as an instance of the adverb determining the past tense of the verb to which it is joined, Dr. Marshman has made a considerable error. 惜乎吾見其進也未見其止也. Our author translates it thus, "Formerly I saw him strenuously pressing forward, I never saw him stop." He has mistaken the first word of the sentence, which signifies sorrow, and is the exclamation of Confucius on the loss of one of his disciples by death, for 昔 "formerly, in old times." In fact there is no adverb of past time in the whole sentence, and the sense of the verb is here determined entirely by the context: it is therefore no example of his rule.

The following insertion of one character

for another of the same sound, is not noticed in the table of errata. 苟至於仁矣無惡也. "If a man's desire be really towards virtue, he indulges in no vice:" for 至 read 志.

The following quotation (p. 263.) from the Four Books 其間必有名世者 Dr. Marshman renders thus, "In this period there may possibly arise a man eminent for virtue and wisdom." The word 必, instead of *may possibly*, means *must positively*.

Under the head of Relatives (p. 334.) there is quoted a sentence from the Lun-yu, which is translated in this manner; "Observe that which a man does, mark that which he pursues; narrowly scrutinize that in which he delights." Here 觀其所由 does not mean "mark that which he pursues," but—"observe the sources of his conduct."

In the following quotation (p. 336.) from the Shoo-king, Dr. Marshman seems to misapprehend the meaning of 讓. The sentence 誰敢不讓 should be translated thus; "Who could presume to decline yielding, or acknowledging inferiority, to thee?" and not "Who dares not imitate thee?" as our author has it.

In page 347, Dr. Marshman calls 我自已 and 你自已 ("I myself," and "thou thyself") *possessive* pronouns; but surely these must be *personal* pronouns: for, if we are to be directed by the analogy of other languages, *ego ipse* was never classed in a Latin grammar among the possessives.

Of such expressions as 親戚 "*relations*," and 畏懼 "*to fear*," where two words or characters of the same import are joined together to convey one meaning,

Dr. Marshman says (p. 515.) that "the reader must be left to form his own opinion; the Chinese unite the characters, but of the principle on which they are formed they say little more, than that one of the characters is often euphonic." It has always appeared to the writer of this, that in a monosyllabic language like the Chinese, it was found necessary in the above manner to combine two words together, conveying the same sense, and thus to form a dissyllable, with a view to being more readily understood in discourse. Hence these compound words are found to be more used in books, in proportion as the language of those books draws nearer to that of common conversation.

The Grammar is followed by an Appendix, containing a translation of the Ta-heŏ, (the first of the Four Books) with the ori-

ginal text. This is extremely well done, and highly creditable to Dr. Marshman's son, who, it appears, was the author. The only error seems to be in the translation of the title. Ta-heŏ does not mean "The important doctrine," but "The study for grown persons." The Jesuits rendered it very well by "The school of adults." This translation is one of the best and most useful parts of the whole book, and it is to be hoped that productions similar to it will again issue from the press at Serampore.

In the foregoing Observations, the writer begs to declaim any intention of violating those proper limits of candour and freedom, which are generally allowed, and ought always to be observed, in the investigation of such subjects; and if his remarks have sometimes proceeded to minuteness, it is only because the importance of Dr. Marsh-

man's book, as a grammatical work, seemed to give it a peculiar claim to such a consideration.

Portland Place,
15th January, 1822.

THE SHADOW IN THE WATER:

A TALE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE.

" Fissus erat paries domui communis utrique:
Hoc vitium————primi sensistis amantes,
Et voci fecistis iter, tutæque per illud
Murmure blanditiæ minimo transire solebant."

Ovid. Metam.

THE SHADOW IN THE WATER.

SECTION I.

DURING the reign of a certain Emperor of the Yuen dynasty, in a district of the province of Canton, there lived two persons of rank, who had retired from the toils of office. Their names were Too and Kwan; the former of whom had obtained the highest literary distinctions, and had exercised the office of an Inspector General of a Province; while Kwan had attained to a lower rank, and an inferior office. They had married two sisters, and as their common father-in-law had no son, they both lived with his family. The abilities and knowledge of these two persons were pretty equal, but

their dispositions were very dissimilar. Kwan was of an austere and strict turn of mind; while Too possessed a natural inclination towards pleasure and enjoyment. The dispositions of their wives were originally similar; but after marriage, each of them conformed to that of her husband, and they gradually became estranged from one another. She who was accustomed to listen to grave discourse, could not endure to talk of pleasure; while the other, after being accustomed to pleasure, rejected whatever savoured of gravity and learning: and thus these two married couples, though they were related in the closest manner, yet, simply from the diversity of their inclinations, disagreed with each other, and day after day were involved in quarrels and disputes.*

* An illustration of the Chinese maxim; "Where views and dispositions agree, the most distant will unite in

For a little while, they nevertheless continued to live together, but after the death of the father and mother-in-law, they divided the house into two parts, and separated them completely by means of a high wall, so as to prevent each being overlooked by the other. In the midst of the garden, however, were two Pavilions, or summer-houses, on each side of a small piece of water, and one of these fell to the share of each of the brothers-in-law.—As far as the dry ground went, a wall of separation was readily built; but as the water was deep, it was not easy to lay the foundations in it.—However, the wall was still carried over, a little way *above* the water; for Kwan, although there was enough of the pond to have formed as effectual a barrier as the Yellow river itself, being jealous lest his

friendship! "Where they disagree, relations themselves will soon be at enmity." See *Proverbs*, &c.

brother-in-law should be able to look into his domestic haunts, spared no trouble nor expense, but contrived, by means of stone pillars in the midst of the Basin, to carry over a wall, as a screen, from one side to the other. From this time, not only the male part of each family had no opportunity of seeing the females of the other, but even the men themselves did not meet above once in a year.

Too had a son, whom he named Chin-seng, and Kwan a daughter, whom he called Yu-kiuen. They were both very nearly of an age, and were so like each other in the face, as to resemble two impressions of the same seal. Their mothers, being sisters, were very much alike, and were, besides, very handsome; nor did their children degenerate from them in this respect. While they still rode about on the backs of their

nurses,* (which was previous to the separation of the families,) it was not easy to discover which was the pearl, and which the gem.† The lady of Too sometimes took Yu-kiuen into her arms, and treated her as her son; and sometimes the wife of Kwan placed Chin-seng by her side to sleep, as if he had been her daughter; and this became a frequent custom with them.

It is said, that the faces and figures of children are very much influenced by their nurses: which perhaps arises from the connection between the milk and the blood. While they were together, being as yet infants, and without knowledge, this pair were unconscious of their resemblance to each other: but after the separation of the two houses, when they were old enough to

* The Chinese mode of carrying children.

† In allusion to the Chinese names, which respectively have these meanings.

have their heads dressed according to the different fashions of the two sexes, they heard people talking about this resemblance: their curiosity was raised, and they wished for an opportunity of making the comparison, to see if what people said was true. But they were divided as completely as the north from the south, and there was no possibility of meeting.

After the lapse of a few years, they both of them began unconsciously to make the same reflections on this subject. After admiring themselves in the mirror, they would each exclaim, "Surely people must look upon me as the handsomest person in the world: there cannot possibly be any one comparable to me!"—These thoughts tended to give each of them a feeling of jealousy towards the other, rather than of love: for they were both very unwilling to allow the claim of superior beauty. They little

thought that this mutual feeling of jealousy would afterwards produce the events which it did, and that their adventures would be converted into a pleasant story.

Yu-kiuen, being a female, could not go over to visit her cousin, though she very much wished it. Chin-seng, however, being of the opposite sex, said to himself, "The quarrels of our parents do not concern us, their children: then let me go over occasionally, and by that means preserve the feelings of relationship. If our mothers may see each other, are their children to be totally debarred?"—So saying, he broke through the old custom, and went over to pay a visit. To his surprise, however, his uncle, as if being aware of it, had already pasted up a prohibition in large characters, to the following effect: "No relations are allowed to come in here, as it is thought expedient to exclude them. All are desired

to pay attention to this, whatever may be their degree of kindred."—When Chin-seng saw this, he stopped immediately, and did not venture to go farther. He saw Kwan, however, and requested him to ask his aunt and cousin to come out and see him. Kwan only called his wife, and would not say a word about his daughter. When Chin-seng again hinted her to him, he pretended to be deaf, or ignorant of his meaning, and gave no answer. Chin-seng, seeing his determination, did not venture to press him farther, but after sitting some time, took his leave.*

From this time, both Chin-seng and Yu-kiuen gave up their childish curiosity, and knowing that they could not verify the reports which they heard, did not care any

* Here follows a long speech from Kwan to his wife, about his reasons for keeping his nephew at a distance, the real motive, perhaps, being his enmity to his brother-in-law.

thing more about the matter, but became quite indifferent as to whether the resemblance existed or not. It seemed, however, one day, by a strange chance, that fate was determined to bring them together; and that they, who could not contrive to meet on dry ground, should view each other by the mutual reflection of their images in the transparent wave.

It happened, about the middle of summer, when the heat was very oppressive, that this young gentleman and lady both came to the summer-houses at the same time, for the purpose of enjoying the cool air. There being but little wind, the face of the water was unruffled, and the two pavilions were clearly reflected in it. As Yu-kiuen was gazing on the water, she started on a sudden and exclaimed, "How happens it that my shadow makes its appearance on the opposite side, while I myself am on this!—This

surely must be some unlucky prodigy?"—After a little consideration, however, she changed her opinion, and found out that this shadow must be the reflected figure of her cousin, who, being without his cap, was to all appearances a female; and from this circumstance, in fact, arose her mistake. She then regarded it attentively, and acknowledged that it was indeed the very image of herself, and that there was hardly the least difference between them. Being thus compelled to give up the exclusive claim to good looks, she began to have a sort of fellow-feeling for what so nearly resembled herself, and by degrees to feel resentment against the parents who could separate such near relations.

Chin-seng, as he sat and leaned against the rails, also caught a sight of the reflection on the opposite side, and began to dance about with joy. He strained his

eyes, and examined it awhile attentively, and was then conscious that what people had said was very true, and that *he* was not to be compared with his cousin. His passion being greater than his discretion, he called out to the shadow, saying, "Are you not Yu-kiuen? Yes, you are the counterpart of myself! What should prevent our meeting, and becoming companions for life?" As he spoke, he extended his two arms towards the water, as if to lift out the object.

Yu-Kiuen, who heard and saw this, felt an increase of the regard which she had already conceived for him, and would willingly have returned these signals: but she was afraid of the consequences if discovered, and having as yet never uttered or done any thing contrary to rule, felt a natural impediment. She therefore merely conveyed the sentiments of her heart in a smile.

Chin-seng, who was exactly like his father in all respects, knew very well, that, in order to discover if a woman was favourably disposed towards you, it was only necessary to observe if she smiled: should she but extend her lips in a smile, it was a good omen. The love-knot was already tied between these two, through the medium of their shadows. From this time, they came regularly every day to the same place, to avoid the heat; nor would they permit any of their attendants to come with them; but preferred sitting there alone, that they might lean over the rails, and converse with each other's shadows in the water. On these occasions, however, Chin-seng had most of the conversation to himself; and the lady only made use of the language of her hands to convey her sentiments; for she was afraid, that should she speak, and her father and mother hear her, she might not only be ex-

posed to severe chastisement, but even her life might be endangered. In this first section has been related only the intercourse between the two shadows: in the next, you will find what happened after the originals had met.

SECTION II.

The two lovers, although from the first rencontre they daily conversed with each other's shadows, were unfortunately still separated by a high wall, which prevented their personally meeting. It happened one day that Yu-kiuen, in consequence of disturbed sleep, had risen rather late, and by the time she was dressed, it was already about ten o'clock. When she went to her summer-house, she could not see Chinseng's shadow in the water: but said to

herself, "He must have waited here until he saw that I was not coming, and then have gone away." Upon turning round, however, she saw, to her great astonishment, that the shadow was changed into the substance, which stood by her side, and with extended arms essayed to salute her. The fact was, that Chin-seng, being determined upon a meeting, had seized the opportunity of her non-arrival to get across the water, and hide himself in a nook, from whence, as soon as she came, he could sally out. Yu-kiuen was a timorous creature, and as she was before fearful lest the slightest whisper should betray them, how much greater was her terror now, lest, in the face of open day, she should be found in company with a young man! With a sudden exclamation, she flew into the house, and for four or five days did not dare to go to the pavilion. Chin-seng, seeing her thus cry out and run

away, had been in no less alarm himself: he turned about instantly, jumped into the water, and got over to the other side. Yu-kiuen's hasty retreat was partly caused by sudden fright, and partly by the dread of discovery; but she had no desire to break off the communication with him. After a little time, she began to repent of her precipitation. She wrote down a few verses, and enclosing them in a flower, rolled the whole up in one of the large leaves of the water lily,* to preserve it from wet. When she next saw Chin-seng's shadow, she threw the roll into the water, and called out to him to take it up. As soon as he heard her, he ran down joyfully from the summer-house, and took up the roll, in which he found the verses, of which the purport was, "That the troubled face of the water was the

* Nymphæa nelumbo.

image of her mind: that she had been greatly surprised by his coming over to that side; but that in running away from him with such haste, she had been prompted only by the fear of discovery and punishment." When Ching-seng had read this, he was delighted beyond measure, and speedily writing some verses in reply, placed them in the roll, and threw them across. In these he observed that "their present mode of communication was nothing more than gathering flowers in a dream; and that they must endeavour to make it more unfettered, as well as more intimate for the future." Having perused this, Yu-kiuen was immediately aware that he was determined to come over at all hazards, let what would happen, and that it must certainly end in some terrible catastrophe. She therefore wrote him back one or two lines, in which she said, "that his first adven-

ture had ended in nothing worse than a severe fright on her part, but she could not tell what might be the consequence of another visit. That *her* father was not like *his*, but would certainly put them both to death: and that therefore he ought to be considerate and prudent." Chin-seng, finding that she gave him this determined answer, did not venture to repeat his former words, but wrote back a formal proposal of marriage, in which "he bewailed the unhappy circumstances which at present opposed their union; but advised that they should wait to see how things turned out, and seize some more favourable opportunity. He only stayed for one word in reply, to render inviolable their contract for life." Yu-kiuen was not only set at ease by this, but readily consented to his proposal, and answered him in a few lines, in which she expressed her willingness, and

declared "that she considered herself as devoted to him alone, and that death only should absolve them from this vow, which was made in the face of heaven." Chin-seng, on the receipt of this answer, was greatly rejoiced, as well as consoled for the misery of separation. From this time, he every day had some conversation with the shadow, with the ultimate view of obtaining the substance. He was constantly writing verses, of which the "shadow in the water" was always the burthen. In about six months, he had composed a little poem, which he called, "The Rencontre of the Shadows," and which, having left it open upon his table, his father and mother chanced to see. They discovered by this, that he had not degenerated from his parents, but that he resembled his father in the direction of his studies, and was likely to realize his mother's wishes. They

felt much rejoiced, and were desirous to form a suitable match for him. They thought of Kwan, but were apprehensive that he was too cross-grained to acquiesce in what tended to the good of others. There was a person named Loo-kung, of the same rank and standing as Kwan, who had filled some subordinate offices, but was now, like Kwan, unemployed. He was of a disposition which was inclined both to learning and enjoyment, and since he partook equally of the tastes of Too and of Kwan, it followed naturally that he should be very intimate with both of them. After consulting with his wife, Too determined that this person was the most proper to conduct the negociation. He therefore went in person to Loo-kung's house, to ask the favour of his mediation, saying "that as his brother-in-law and himself had for some time been at variance, he hoped his friend would act

the part of a peace-maker, and endeavour to restore their former union; that the proposal of the match might then be successful." Loo-kung replied, that "since they were such near connexions, it was highly requisite that they should be good friends: and that he would use his utmost endeavours on the occasion."

Loo-kung, soon after, had an interview with Kwan. He commenced by asking him his daughter's age; and whether she had yet been betrothed to any one. He then gradually introduced the subject with which he had been entrusted by Too. When he had fully understood him, Kwan smiled without returning any answer, but with a pencil, which he held in his hand, wrote down a few lines on the table at which they were sitting, to the following effect: "Since the disagreement and enmity have so long existed, it is not an easy

matter to effect even a reconciliation! but to think of marriage is little better than a dream."

Loo-kung, seeing how he received the proposal, knew that it was useless to press him farther; and therefore said nothing more on the subject, but went away to inform Too. He merely told the latter that Kwan had obstinately refused his consent: but suppressed the exact words which he had written down on the table. Too and his wife upon this gave up the idea entirely, and began to look out for another match for their son. They recollected that Loo-kung himself had an adopted daughter, named Kin-yun, who in respect to both her mental and personal qualities was in no-wise inferior to Yu-kiuen. They therefore engaged a person to go over and propose the match. Loo-kung said in reply, that marriage being a thing of great moment, it

was not proper to be guided by one's wishes alone, but that the *Pă-tse (eight characters) on both sides should be compared together. If, on comparing these, it appeared that the combinations did not portend any thing unfortunate, the match might take place. Too then took his son's Pă-tse, and sent them to Loo-kung. As soon as the latter had looked at them, he was greatly astonished, for it appeared that Chin-seng's eight characters were precisely those of Kin-yun; that these two were born in the same hour, of the same day, of the same month, of the same year. He then exclaimed, "It plainly appears, from this, that the match is ordained by heaven, and therefore it no longer rests with man to oppose it. There can be no more doubts

* Eight characters, signifying the year, month, day and hour, in which the person was born—a sort of judicial astrology.

on the subject." The negotiator of the marriage returned with this answer to Too and his wife, who rejoiced very much, and, without saying any thing to their son, concluded the match.

But how happened it that Chin-seng, who was very quick and intelligent, should not discover what his father and mother had been doing for him? The truth is, that from the first moment in which he saw Yu-kiuen, this young gentleman seemed to have transferred his very soul to the shadow in the water, and became to all appearances more dead than alive. If he was called, he gave no reply; if he was questioned, he returned no answer. He would do nothing but sit in the summer-house and lean against the rails: nor would he allow a single person to come near him. In this way, he could hear nothing about the concerns of his family; and even his own mar-

riage was agreed upon for some time without his knowing any thing about it.

By chance, however, Yu-kiuen heard somebody mention it, and began immediately to fear that he had broken his faith with her. She wrote him a most cutting letter, expressing her resentment, and by this means Chin-seng became acquainted with the fact. He went immediately to his father and mother, and as soon as he understood the circumstances, began to cry out like a froward child, and to entreat them, as they valued his life, to break off the match. He was enraged, too, with Loo-kung, and began to abuse him, saying, "the refusal of my uncle's consent is merely a fabrication of his; and it is plain that he himself, wanting me for a son-in-law, and unwilling to give me up, has contrived this scheme. If any one else had been the negotiator, my wishes would have been

accomplished by this time." He then called him by all sorts of names, and abused him heartily. Too would have corrected his son for this, but having formerly indulged him, he could not now exert his authority. He knew also that Chin-seng's disposition was the copy of his own; and since he could not restrain his own passions, how should he govern those of his son? He therefore let him have his own way entirely; but advised him to moderate his grief, and let *him* manage the affair. Chin-seng was for fixing a certain time, within which the one match should be broken off, and the other concluded; and vowed, that were he disappointed in this, he would find out a short way of cutting off his family's posterity.* Poor Too had no help for it, but was obliged to go as a self-condemned†

* That is, he would kill himself.

† Literally, "carrying on his head the instrument of his punishment."

criminal to Loo-kung. He first entreated pardon for his mistake, and then informed him of his son's determination. Loo-kung, when he had heard him, changed colour, and exclaimed, "What sort of person do you take me to be, that you may thus agree with me upon a match, and then break it off again? When my friends hear of it, how will they not ridicule and despise me? Since your son is averse from an alliance with my family, he must have some prior engagement: pray inform me who the person may be." Too answered, "His mind is fixed upon the daughter of Kwan. Though he knows that he cannot obtain her, he yet wishes to retain a shadow of hope, and await the vicissitudes of fortune." When Loo-kung heard this, he smiled to himself, and then read to Too the strong answer which Kwan had written down, when the match was proposed to him.

Upon this, Too could not refrain from weeping violently, and exclaiming with a deep sigh, "If it be thus, my poor son will certainly die, and I shall become a childless ghost!" Kwan replied, "Why so? Your son has no doubt had some intercourse with the lady, and contracted an inviolable engagement." Too answered, "Nothing of consequence has passed between them, though they have had some slight intercourse with one another. Without having ever met, they have for half-a-year been enamoured—of one another's shadows; and the mutual feeling is now so strong, that it is impossible to conquer it. How can you assist me, my friend?" So saying, he presented to Loo-kung his son's poetical composition on the subject. When he had read it, the latter showed some anger, but soon laughed, and said, "Although this is a vexatious affair,

it still constitutes a very pleasant story. Making love by shadows is a thing which has never happened before; and the tale will certainly be transmitted to posterity. The parents, however, should not have let it come to this; but since it *has* come to this, the sooner it is settled the better. Let it all alone to me; and I will contrive to bring it to a happy conclusion. It is better that my (adopted) daughter should be disappointed, and encounter the disgrace of having been rejected: I will find out another match for her." Too said, that "if he did this, he should be for ever obliged to him;" and going home he informed his son of the conversation. Chin-seng, from being very sorrowful, became extremely happy, and not only ceased to abuse Loo-kung, but began to sing his praises; and pressed his father and mother to urge him to conclude the affair. He himself likewise

went over in person, and was advised by Loo-kung, that "as this business could not be happily effected without time, it was better for him to attend a little longer to his studies, and give up his thoughts of the union for the present." From this time Loo-kung at once sought another son-in-law for himself, and laboured to promote the cause of Chin-seng. However, he would not mention the affair of the refusal before his family; first, because he was afraid of people's ridicule, and secondly, because he feared that his daughter might find out what she had lost, and evil consequences ensue. He asserted, on the contrary, that his intended son-in-law had not answered his wishes, and that he himself had broken off the match, thinking it was disadvantageous. He was not aware that his daughter would contrive to elicit the real truth out of the feigned story.

Kin-yun had already discovered that Chin-seng's eight characters were the same as her own. She had heard, too, that her intended husband was extremely handsome: and she congratulated herself on these circumstances, and hoped for an early conclusion of the marriage. When therefore she suddenly learned that the match was given up, she was very much disturbed: and her maids also expressed their resentment against their master, for "breaking off so excellent a marriage, when it was already determined upon. When his intended son-in-law, too, came to his house on the subject, he had persisted in refusing him. Since he refused him, he ought at least to have broken off all further intercourse; why then did he assist him in his pursuit of another object, and thus throw away so excellent a son-in-law?" Kin-yun hearing this, was very much incensed, and

said to herself, "I am only his adopted daughter, and therefore he does not care what befalls me: if I were his own child, he would never have treated me in this manner!" After some days, her agitation of mind ended in disorder of body. It is very truly said, that "there is no grief like the grief that does not speak:* there is no pain like that which seeks not relief." She would not communicate her troubles to any one, but buried them within her own breast. The consequence was that they became intolerable, and nothing would cure her malady. That a gentleman should fly from a lady, and a lady be in despair for a gentleman, is a case which never happened before since the beginning of the world! Our readers may stop here, and consider

* ——— "The grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'er fraught heart, and bids it break."
Macbeth.

the subject, and then proceed to learn what followed.

SECTION III.

It has been observed that Kwan was very strict in the regulation of his family. His suspicions being now excited by Loo-kung's proposing the match, he immediately stopped up the space under the wall by means of earth and bricks, and ordered that some one might always attend on his daughter, nor suffer her to be alone. From this time the lovers were not only prevented from seeing each other personally, but even their very shadows were separated. As Chin-seng could have no further communication with Yu-kiuen, he made some more verses, of which the subject was this separation, and added them on to the end of his former ones.

Yu-kiuen had only understood his having courted some one else, without knowing any thing of the match having been broken off. She inveighed bitterly against the fickleness of her lover, who could thus break his vow and leave her to misery. She was also very much incensed against the selfishness of Loo-kung, who (she thought) had taken the intended son-in-law of another to himself, and instead of being the negociator of a match, converted himself into a father-in-law. She felt convinced that his proposal of the marriage to her father was insincere, and nothing more than a way to save appearances, and that therefore her father had refused him. This vexation of mind having lasted some time, at length ended in her refusing both food and drink; and by degrees she became seriously indisposed.

The injury which Kin-yun thought she

had suffered was nothing more than a mistake, as was also the resentment of Yu-kiuen towards Chin-seng; and though their sickness proceeded from different causes, they were both founded originally in an error. Chin-seng, also, was affected with an indisposition, which partly resembled that of Kin-yun, and partly that of Yu-kiuen; for when he thought of the latter, he looked upon Kin-yun as his enemy, and said that she was the cause of his disappointment; and when he thought of the former (who was not inferior in beauty and whose age corresponded with his own) he looked with resentment upon Yu-kiuen, and inveighed against her perfidy and deceit, saying that when she heard of his having proposed to Kin-yun, she had gone to her father and asked him to close up the wall, thus assuming a pretension to great virtue and correct-

ness.* His father and mother, seeing that he was not likely to marry either of them, could only let matters take their course, and wait the event.

The more indisposed 'Kin-yun became, so much the more desirous was Loo-kung to conclude another match for her: and her indisposition seemed to increase in proportion to his anxiety on this point. Being ignorant of the real cause of her uneasiness, he thought that it arose merely from being disappointed of her wedding, and that it was only necessary to find another husband in order to restore her spirits. He therefore commissioned people to look out; but it so happened that all the suitors who came to his house were particularly frightful and disagreeable; so that the maids, when they saw them enter one after another, could

* A tedious soliloquy of Chin-seng in the original is shortened in the translation.

not help screaming with affright. After a succession of these disagreeable events, Kin-yun became more and more sick and reduced; and she lay upon her bed, almost ready to die. When Loo-kung saw this, he became somewhat alarmed, and inquiring carefully of her maids, discovered the real cause of her indisposition. He then began to repent of what he had done, saying, "when a woman has been engaged, it is a very improper thing to change; and there is no wonder in her being hurt. It is all my fault! When Too came to me, in order to get off the match, I ought not to have given my consent; but having once given it, I cannot again go and urge him on the subject. Besides, I have engaged to do my good offices for Chin-seng, and as an honourable man values his word more than gold, how can I break my promise? The only way will be to convert the two matches into one, and

bring all the three people together;* but keep old Kwan in ignorance of a part, until the whole is concluded, and then let him into the secret; for when it is irrevocable, though he should be ever so violent he cannot alter it." There was still, however, a difficulty, in regard to the precedence of the two wives; but having considered carefully for a while, he found out an expedient even for this, saying; "of old, when Ngo-hwang and Niu-ying, both of the family of the Emperor Yaou, espoused the great Shun, they surely were not distinguished into first and second wife, but styled each other sisters." Having made up his mind, he directed the attendants to comfort Kin-yun, and invited Too to come over to a conference with him. He informed him "that there was a way by which all parties might

* That is, let Chin-seng marry both the ladies.

be accommodated: which would prevent his own adopted daughter having a second lover, and by which the character of Kwan's daughter might be preserved; that his son Chin-seng was extremely fortunate; and that the good which awaited him seemed to be the especial result of his happy destiny."

Too was extremely glad to hear this, and asked him how it was all to happen. Loo-kung answered, "Your brother-in-law is of so obstinate a disposition that it will be better not to appeal to his feelings, but to bring him round by stratagem. I have arrived at the middle of life without having children, and he has often advised me to adopt a male successor. I shall now tell him that I *have* adopted one, and that I am desirous of obtaining Yu-kiuen as my daughter-in-law. When he considers our friendship, he certainly will consent. After his consent is obtained, I shall also tell him that

as my daughter is unmarried, I wish to invite Chin-seng to become her husband, and request him to agree to the compound alliance, to complete the harmony of all parties. If he then persists in remaining at variance with you, he will lose my friendship also. But having once given his consent, he cannot, I think, well alter the agreement. I shall then chuse a fortunate day, and under the pretence of his daughter's marriage on the one hand, and of your son's on the other, get the three people together, and complete their union. Is not this an excellent plan?" When Too had heard this, he smiled, and could not help bowing down to the ground, exclaiming, that "Kwan's ability and kindness were both of them supernatural: he could not sufficiently express his obligation and praise."

Too next proceeded to report this unusu-

ally good news to his son. Chin-seng, who amidst his twofold sorrow received this double portion of happiness, could set no bounds to his joy. Though his grief and uneasiness had been great, the present remedy was fully adequate to curing them. Kin-yun, too, when she heard the same from her attendants and understood the change that had taken place in her favour, got well without any physic. She had only to wait till the time appointed for the marriage, to become "the sister of Niu-ying, and the wife of Shun."—(p. 89).

Unhappily, however, only two out of the three sick persons were as yet recovered; and Yu-kiuen, the third, had not heard the good news. Loo-kung had an interview with Kwan, and entrapped him in the snare which they had prepared for him: for Kwan, seeing the severe indisposition of his daughter, had a natural wish to see her

married as soon as possible; and as Loo-kung was his particular friend and colleague, he was glad to cement their intimacy by the match. He therefore gave his hearty consent, and made not the slightest difficulty. Loo-kung, fearing that he might possibly repent, waited only a day or two before he sent the marriage presents. When these had been received, he mentioned the match with Chin-seng. Kwan, though he did not express his disapprobation, could not help feeling displeasure at this. He laughed at Loo-kung, and told him that he had chosen a good daughter-in-law, but a bad son-in-law; and that while he was admitting a friend at the great gate, the devil* had got in at the postern; in short, that what he had gained

* *Kwei*, "a devil, or evil spirit." The name civilly given by the Chinese to Europeans, with the addition of *Fan*, "foreign."

was not equal to what he had lost. Still, however, as the thing was done, it was useless to speak, or to take him to task about it.

Yu-kiuen, when she heard that her lover was about to espouse Kin-yun, and that she herself was to marry into Loo-kung's family, and live with her great enemy, was unable to express her resentment at this additional disgrace and insult. She was for instantly writing a secret letter to Chin-seng, telling him her sentiments on the occasion; and then throwing herself into the water, or suspending herself from a beam, in order to put an end to her existence. Her maids, however, kept such strict watch, and her parents were so cautious, that she could not only not find a messenger to carry her letter, but had not a place wherein she could write it.

One morning, an attendant came in to

announce that Kin-yun, hearing her friend was unwell, wished to come over in person, and ask after her health. Yu-kiuen, hearing this, was very much disturbed, thinking that the other, after having won her lover, and snatched away her hopes, was coming, in the exultation of her heart, to boast her success over her; and that, unable to wait until the period when they were to meet, she had anticipated the time for insulting her. She was determined, however, that Kin-yun should not be gratified in her malice; and urged her mother to send a person immediately with an answer.

She was not aware that Kin-yun, far from having any bad intentions, wished to imitate the bird* which is the messenger of glad tidings, and fly to her ear with the

* *Hy-tsiŏ*, a poetical name for the swallow.

secret intelligence. Loo-kung was very desirous to hasten the union, knowing that Yu-kiuen, the daughter of such a man as Kwan, would not consent to lose her respectability, but as soon as she heard that she was contracted to somebody else, without knowing the real truth, would certainly put an end to herself. If he sent a note by any other person, her doors were so strictly guarded, that no admittance could be gained: he therefore made use of his daughter as a messenger to communicate the intelligence.

When Yu-kiuen saw that the answer which she had returned had not the effect of stopping Kin-yun, she was obliged to let her come in: but she previously put on the face of a person who had suffered a great injury and disgrace, and resolved, that as soon as the other had uttered what she had to say, she would overwhelm her, in return,

with a sharp and chilling answer.—To her surprise, as soon as the ceremonies of meeting were over, Kin-yun stretched out her two hands, and placing them on Yu-kiuen's shoulder, drew her a little towards herself, like a person who had something particular to say, which she did not wish others to hear.—Yu-kiuen was much amazed, and as soon as they had taken a little tea together, led her visitor into another room, and asked the reason of her behaviour. Kin-yun answered, "The purpose of my coming to-day is not so much to inquire after your health, as to communicate to you some joyful intelligence. The poem concerning the rencontre of the shadows has already been converted into a romance, and it is right that we bring it to a finale. In addition to the principal female performer* in the

* For the names of the usual characters in the Chinese dramas, see Morrison's Dictionary, (according to the sounds,) under the word *He*, "a theatrical performance."

Drama, an inferior one has been added;—but you need not be anxious about the result." Yu-kiuen with great surprise asked her meaning. Kin-yun then explained minutely from beginning to end her father's plan for the union; at which the former was greatly pleased.—All three of the sick persons had now found a cure for their indisposition: and they agreed together upon the means to be pursued, only keeping in ignorance *one* person, who was Kwan.—Loo-kung fixed upon a fortunate day, and at once got Chin-seng and Yu-kiuen to his house, where his daughter awaited her nuptials. The marriage was then concluded, and all three appeared in the hall together, and went through the regular ceremonies.*

* Here is omitted a rhapsody of the author's, in which he compares the ladies to flowers, and the hero to a tree; and the hero to the moon, and the ladies to two light clouds; gravely ending with calling them "a brace and a half of Deities."

When the marriage had been concluded three days, Loo-kung directed a feast to be prepared, and invited Too and Kwan to a meeting of relations. As, however, he was apprehensive that the latter might not come, he wrote a short note, and folded it within the ticket of invitation. In this, he called to Kwan's recollection "the words which he had written down on the table, about dreaming, and exhorted him, as he was now become a connexion of his, not to suffer a trivial animosity to interfere with the due celebration of the important ceremonies:—and he again fixed the day for the meeting."—The commencement of this note had no effect on Kwan, but when he came to the mention of the important ceremonies, he could not throw off the obligations of propriety, and he felt that it would not be right to borrow a pretext for refusing to go. On the day appointed, therefore, he went

over to the meeting of relations; and when he arrived, found Too already there, in his proper place.

Loo-kung, having ordered a carpet to be spread, requested his friends to stand in the highest place; and himself taking the lowest, they all bowed down four times. He then requested Too to step aside, and himself bowed down to the ground four times, before Kwan, saying, "The four first prostrations were on account of our meeting: the four last are to request your forgiveness for myself; and I rely on your liberality for excusing all the errors which I have committed from the beginning."—Kwan answered, "You have hitherto been a plain and straight forward sort of personage: whence comes it, then, that you are so ceremonious on a sudden? Perhaps, knowing me to be rather a punctilious character, you have a mind to take me off."

Loo-kung replied, "how could I dare to act thus?—From the time when we agreed upon the marriage, I have committed a great many errors: as innumerable as the hairs of my head; and I have only to entreat you to consider our present close connexion, and extend your liberal forgiveness towards me. The proverb says 'when the son has offended his father, he can do no more than carry to him the instrument of his own punishment'—this applies with equal truth to our case. I have already performed my prostrations; the marriage is concluded: and if you were inclined to punish me, it would be of no avail."—Kwan could not understand the meaning of all this, and still thought it must be a mere affectation of humility: but as soon as Loo-kung's speech was over, the music on both sides of the steps at the entrance struck up, and deafened all their ears like thunder; so that they

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were not only ignorant of what each other said, but could not hear even themselves speak. In the midst of this uproar, in came a number of attendants, with the three newly married persons, to the hall; these, arranging themselves on the carpet, only waited for the signal to prostrate themselves.—Kwan stared for some time, and saw his daughter alone on the left; but all the rest were strangers, and he could not perceive his son-in-law.—Then raising his voice, he cried out to her saying,—"Who are you, that are thus standing there alone, without paying any regard to propriety, and disgracing yourself by such irregular behaviour?—Do you still remain?"—He then raised his voice still higher, in a rage, but nobody could hear him. When the three prostrated themselves, Kwan turned round, and wanted to go away, but his two friends came up to him, and one of them holding

him by each arm, not only would not let him go out, but likewise prevented his returning the ceremony; thus squeezing him on each side, like a pair of torturing sticks. When he had received the twelve prostrations, (four from each) in due form, the two ladies immediately retired, and the musicians were then ordered to cease. Kwan changed colour, and exclaimed to Loo-kung, "When my daughter appeared in the hall, how is it that I did not see your son? *Your* daughter and *your* son-in-law are not sufficiently near relations to perform their prostrations to me on this occasion. I cannot understand the meaning of this ceremony, and must request you to explain it."—Loo-kung answered, "I will not deceive you. Your nephew is my adopted son, and my adopted son is your son-in-law, and your son-in-law is also my son-in-law. He has on this occasion acted a double

character, and hence, in the performance of the late ceremony, you received twelve prostrations. You are a very intelligent personage, and must surely understand it now."

Kwan considered a little, but still could not make it out, and said to Loo-kung, "I cannot comprehend a single word of what you say: it is a mystery which I cannot unravel. Am I come to a meeting of relations, or am I in a dream?"—Loo-kung answered, "I mentioned the subject of dreaming in my note to you, and you should be aware that it is a subject which was first started, not by me, but by yourself, when I proposed the match to you, and when you wrote down your answer on the table. You then sowed the seeds of that dream which has now come to maturity.—But man's life is a dream; why, then, need you make a great stir about it?—I advise you

to take the thing as it comes, and bring this dream to a happy conclusion!"—When Kwan had heard these words, he began to comprehend it, and asked Loo-kung, "how he, so correct a man, could practise such deceit: that if he wanted to act as the negotiator of the match, he should have spoken clearly, and not have laid this trap for his unwariness."—To this Loo-kung replied, "And did I not speak clearly?—but you, instead of giving me a plain answer, thought proper to deal in tropes and figures, as if you wanted to set me a dreaming. I therefore could not speak to you any longer in a straight forward manner; but was compelled to act to the best of my abilities. If indeed I had only sought my own particular good, and, deceiving you into the marriage of your daughter alone, caused you to look ridiculous,—this would have been an unpardonable offence: but by giving *my*

own daughter in marriage, I also effected the marriage of yours. On performing the ceremonies in the hall, I still gave your daughter the higher place, and my own willingly took the lower. There certainly, then, never was such another conscientious contriver as myself. I entreat you to relinquish your angry intentions, and practise the rule of forgiveness."—Kwan, when he had heard thus far, relaxed the rigidity of his visage; and after a little more explanation,* all parties having become good friends, they closed the day with feasting and merriment.

* The conclusion, which in the original consists merely of a further conversation, repeating what the reader already knows, has been a little curtailed in the translation.

THE TWIN SISTERS:

A TALE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE.

——————Bonus atque fidus
Judex.—— *Hor.*

THE TWIN SISTERS.

EARLY in the reign of an Emperor, of the Ming dynasty, there dwelt, in a city of the province of Hoo-kwang, a merchant, named Siaou-kiang, who had the misfortune to live on very indifferent terms with his wife. They were for a long while without any family, until, after a lapse of many years, two daughters, twins, were born to them. It is a popular remark, that sons generally resemble the father, and daughters the mother; but these two sisters, contrary to what is usually the case, did not inherit the features of either of their parents; and they seemed like the children of some other family. Neither was the difference confined to their persons, for their dispositions were quite

as dissimilar. As the father and mother were extremely plain and very stupid, so, on the contrary, the daughters were very handsome and particularly clever. After ten years of age, they began to resemble fair flowers glittering with dew, or fragrant herbs agitated by the breeze; and their beauty every day increased, until, having reached the age of fourteen or fifteen, no one could behold them without emotion. Not only were the young men in love with them, but even those of a more advanced age, when they beheld them, confessed the power of their charms.

Their dispositions were extremely docile, but notwithstanding this, they had learned but little; and the whole extent of their knowledge was confined to figures.*, As to the use of the needle, and other female accomplishments, they needed but little

* Their father being a merchant.

instruction in order to acquire them. Their dress and ornaments were (from their station in life) coarse and ordinary, but yet, when these two girls were compared with the daughters of more wealthy and dignified persons, it was allowed by all, that they need not change their homely dress, and metal ornaments, for the silks and jewels of the others.

As they were so very handsome and engaging, it naturally followed that the young men of fortune and family should seek them.

The good man and his dame were more like enemies than husband and wife. The former wanted to marry his daughters without the interference of the latter; and his wife, on the other hand, wished to obtain two sons-in-law without the knowledge of her husband. With this principle of mutual

deceit, they each of them secretly engaged with their separate friends.

Though the father was severe in his own house, he was naturally of a kind and friendly disposition: not like his wife, whose turbulence led her, when provoked, to make the neighbourhood ring with her violence. People therefore said to themselves, that it would be an easier thing to dupe him than her, and that of the two, it was better to aid the wife than the husband. Hence it was, that the latter was more successful in her adherents than the former, and after a little while, for each of her daughters a husband was selected. A fortunate day was chosen for the marriage, and they (the Bridegrooms) were desired to send the wedding presents: but with a view to prevent her husband's disapprobation and rejection of the match, he was kept in ignorance of the whole.

There were some sensible persons, who said, that the propriety of a daughter's marriage ought to be determined by the father, and that if the mother would not consent, the matter should be referred to the magistrate, who would never side with an obstinate woman, nor put aside the husband for the sake of favoring the wife. These persons wanted to get somebody to make their proposals to the former: but unfortunately, all those whom they asked, proved to be as ready to deceive him, as they were afraid of his wife, and when invited to act against her, they immediately made some pretext for declining. They dared not to incur her resentment, saying, that if they offended the husband, they had nothing to do but to wait until he broke out, and then reason with him: and if he was violent, they might still go and complain to the magistrate. But if they of-

fended his wife, and her anger was excited, it was not fit for them to contend with a woman; and should she abuse, and even chastise them, they must bear it, and could do nothing in return.

Thus it was, that no one would consent to assist those who wished to make proposals to the good man, and they were accordingly obliged to open the subject to him in person. He had been very much nettled at seeing people in the first instance go to his wife, without coming to consult him, and therefore, on the present occasion, when the marriage of his daughters was proposed to him, he echoed his consent with great satisfaction, and made not the slightest objection.

The suitors told him, that every one was afraid of his wife, and that, for this reason, none would act as mediators. What, therefore, was to be done? He replied, "When

the parties are unknown to each other, it is necessary to make use of such agents; but when I have already given my consent, what more is required?" The suitors, hearing this, were very glad, and a lucky day was chosen on the spot for the transmission and reception of the marriage presents.

The husband's plan was similar to his wife's, inasmuch as he would make no disclosure beforehand, but left the matter to be developed by the occasion. It happened that the lucky day fixed upon by both parties was the same, and the gifts of all the four bridegrooms arrived at the door together. The gongs made a great din, and the different articles composing the presents were spread out profusely, so that there was no telling to what names they belonged.

The first idea was, that the bridegrooms,

knowing the bad understanding which existed between the parents of the bride, and fearful of offending either party, had each caused a pair of ceremonial tickets to be made out, one for Siaou-kiang, and the other for his wife, thinking it better to be too ceremonious, than not enough so. When, however, the tickets were examined a little closer, it turned out, to the great astonishment of either party, that no two names were the same, but that all four of the cards had a different title.

The father and mother stared at one another, and both broke out at once. Said one, "In addition to my two sons-in-law, whence come these two wretched pretenders?"—Said the other, "Who has sent all these things to be placed by the side of my presents?"

He exclaimed to his wife, "Who will have the audacity to receive one of these

gifts, without the consent of me, the master of the house?"—His wife replied, "Without leave from me, the mistress of the family, who will venture to take any thing that is here?"

Upon this, the good man said, "It is a maxim, that a woman, before her marriage, must obey her father, and after it, her husband. Now with respect to my daughters, I being their father, it is their duty to be guided by me, and with respect to yourself, I being your husband, have a right to control you. What is the reason, then, of your behaving in this manner?"—She immediately replied, "It is also a maxim, that in the marriage of a son, the father is to have the direction, but in the marriage of a daughter, the mother. If the former were our case at present, then indeed you might do as you pleased, but as we are now concerned about the latter, I, as a

matter of course, have the sole right to command. Under what pretence, then, do you meddle with my affairs?"

From words they would very soon have proceeded to blows, but those who were standing by prevented them, and kept them apart from one another. The wife would not listen to another word. She took the presents which belonged to her two favorites, and receiving them all as they were inserted in the list, told the people to go back with her answer. At the same time, she ordered all the rest to be thrown out of doors, and would not let one of them remain in the house.

Her husband was of course greatly enraged at this. He, in his turn, had them all brought back, and emptying the boxes and bowls, wrote an answer himself, and sent it.

He was well aware that this double

espousal must ultimately come before the magistrate; but deferred the presentation of a written report, and was resolved to try what prompt and forcible measures would do in the first instance. The parents of his intended sons-in-law were desired by him to chuse a fortunate day, and having made a grand preparation of lanterns and torches, to engage a number of sturdy fellows to support them in carrying off his daughters by force. Should this measure fail, it would not be too late to present an address.

Those two persons readily adopted the suggestion, and chose an early day for the nuptials. They hired a number of ruffians to follow the chairs, with a hope that they might carry every thing by numbers.

It remained for them to discover, that such a plan might answer well enough against men, but that a female opponent

was not so easily discomfited. The wife placed herself at her door, with one of the bars in her hands, and by her resolution plainly shewed, that she would have no mercy on those who attempted to cross the threshold. They all dispersed like mice to their holes, and left half of the chairs, lanterns and torches behind them; which might be called levying "contributions from the vanquished." All these were seized and detained by the lady for her own use.

Her husband, greatly incensed at this, immediately urged his two friends to present an address without delay. These persons, however, knew very well that such an address on this occasion was not likely to be very successful, and that it was not usual for persons, so closely connected, to proceed to law against each other. They therefore determined not to oppose her openly, but to state that they had been

repulsed with violence from Siaou-kiang's door, and lay the whole blame upon him in the first instance. They resolved to resort to the Chy-foo, the first magistrate of the district, instead of the Chy-hien. When their address had been presented, the husband sent in a statement of the facts as they really happened, by way of answer. The two friends also sent in particular statements, and, as if they deemed it inexpedient to bring a married woman too much forward on such an occasion, merely placed her at the head of the witnesses, saying, that she was the mother of the two girls who had been betrothed, and should be examined by the magistrate.

At that time the office of chief magistrate was exercised by a deputy. This person had not long been in the situation, but bore the character of a very upright man, and possessed high literary rank at

an early age. When he had received the address, he ordered a notice to be put up, fixing the period of trial within a few days. He previously sent for the husband in order to examine him, and afterwards for all the four persons, as well as every one whose name was mentioned in the address, with the exception of the woman; for he supposed, that as she had a husband to guide her, any evidence which she could give must be the same as his, since it was not customary for husband and wife to differ on such points.

He was very little aware that on this occasion the mother of the betrothed daughters was the enemy of the intended fathers-in-law. He had heard of litigations between friends, but seldom of any between such near connexions as these. When the wife observed that she was not called upon for her evidence, she complained loudly of

the injustice that was done her, and the Mandarin was therefore obliged to send for her up.

She pointed to her husband, and said, "Though he may pretend to the character of a man, he has very little of the sense of one, and any body that pleases can make a fool of him. He has no regard to his daughters' happiness, and those whom he has chosen to be their husbands are the most disreputable persons in the neighbourhood. It was for this reason that I endeavoured to provide somewhat better for them, and would not permit him to have the control. I have to beg that your worship will condescend to give me your instructions."

When the Mandarin had heard what she had to say, he observed it was reasonable enough. He then sent for the husband, to examine him again. The latter stated, "that his wife was of a very turbulent dis-

position, and on every occasion endeavoured to brow-beat and get the better of her husband. That on common occasions, he was ready to submit to this, but the marriage of his daughters was a thing of such importance, that he could never think of giving up his right into her hands."

The judge, seeing that what he said was also reasonable, felt himself at a loss to decide between them. He then addressed himself to both, saying, "According to rule, the husband has a right to be arbitrator on such an occasion as that in dispute, but in family affairs it is sometimes not possible to adhere strictly to general rules, nor to consider things too much in the abstract. Wait until I call your daughters before me, and hear what they have to say: whether they think that their father or their mother is doing what is best for them."

Both the husband and the wife prostrated

themselves, and said they were quite satisfied with this arrangement. The Mandarin then issued a written order, and sent persons to summon the daughters. When these were gone, he said to himself, that "as the parents were both so plain and ordinary in their appearance, it was not likely that fair flowers should be produced from reeds: but if the daughters were still more ugly than the parents, there was no telling where it would end!" He then, with a countenance on which surprise was ready depicted, waited their arrival in his hall.

As soon as they were arrived, all the inferior officers and attendants, without their usual regard to decorum, pressed forward in a crowd to gaze, as if some prodigy had dropt down from the skies. As for the Mandarin himself, he was altogether amazed, and could not guess whence two

such divine persons could have flown thither. Luckily for him, his emissaries at the same moment announced that "such a person's daughters were arrived." He then knew that flowers of extraordinary beauty had for once been produced from reeds, and that the daughters were not only an improvement on their parents, but that they retained no resemblance whatever of them.

When he had recovered from his surprise, he addressed them thus, "Your father and mother, being unable to agree together, have, it appears, betrothed you two to four different persons, and at last refer their dispute to my decision. Your father says that your mother is in the wrong, and she, in her turn, complains of him. It has been observed of old, that 'An upright magistrate can ill interfere with family affairs.' I have accordingly

sent for you to ask whether, in general, your father or your mother has acted with most discretion?"

Both the girls were naturally shy and bashful, and would at any time have run away at the sight of one man, but now, when several hundred pairs of eyes were fixed, and as it were nailed, upon them, they were ready to hide themselves under the table.

The judge's eyes were clearer than other people's. Having observed them for some time, he asked them how they could give answers if they were so bashful? When they replied not a word, though he repeated his question several times, he began to draw his evidence from their looks. These seemed to say "that both of their parents were a little in the wrong, but it did not become *them*, as their daughters, to mention it."

The judge inwardly understood their meaning, and said to himself, "Two such charming young women ought not to be given to ordinary husbands. I shall not now ask whether the father or the mother be in the right, but send for all four of the intended bridegrooms, and compare them together. Should the girls consent to marry any of them, I shall award to them the same." Having thus resolved, he was on the point of issuing a written order for their appearance, when the four fathers-in-law kneeled down before him, and said, "It is not necessary for your worship to send out the order. Our sons are all of them waiting outside, each hoping that his wife may be awarded to him. May we proceed to call them in?"

The judge said, "If that is the case, make haste and tell them to come in."—They all four went out, and presently re-

turned, each leading in his son, saying, "This is my boy: I hope your worship will award to him his wife."—The latter however shook his head, and observed the four youths narrowly. They looked as if they had all come from the same stock, being very strange and uncouth in their appearance. Far from being good looking, there was not one without some defect in his limbs or features. The judge said to himself, "To chuse them husbands from among these four, would be like searching for a hero among dwarfs. How can I possibly select one!—I did not think that so much beauty and such ill-fortune could be combined."

He then sighed, and calling on the father's favourites to kneel down on the left side, and on the mother's, to do the same on the right, he told the two girls to kneel down in the midst, and spoke to them as follows.—

"All those who were engaged by your father and mother to marry you are now present. I have already asked you for your real sentiments. Since you would not speak, I suppose that in the first place, shame prevented you, and in the second, the difficulty of mentioning your parents' faults. I do not now call on you to speak a word, but merely to turn your heads a little on one side, and thereby evince your real wishes. If you wish to marry your father's favourites, turn yourselves to the left; if your mother's, to the right. But remember, that in this slight movement is involved the welfare of your whole life, and your choice should therefore be a good one."

When he had said this, the whole assembly anxiously fixed their eyes upon the two damsels, to see them turn their heads. They, however, on the first entrance of the four suitors, had looked at them, and ob-

serving their uncouth appearance, they hung down their heads, and closed their eyes, and let fall their tears in silence. When the judge had spoken to them, they turned neither to the right, nor to the left, but remaining fixed, with their faces towards him, began to weep aloud. The more he pressed them to speak, the more violently did they cry; until all those who were present began to weep in sympathy with them, and every one felt the extent of their hardship.

The judge then said, "It would seem from this, that the persons chosen by both your parents are exceptionable. You need not think of marrying any of them; I will provide for you myself. There is no good reason why two such persons should be given as wives to booby clowns. Place yourselves on one side; I have arranged it

all for you already. Call up the father and mother."—They both appeared and knelt down before the table, on which the judge striking with his hand, cried out in great anger, "You two must be devoid of all principle to regard your daughters' welfare as mere child's play. If you wanted to give them in marriage, you should have consulted together, and seen that the parties were suited to each other: not have endeavoured to unite persons so dissimilar. You may have learned, from what has here passed, the probable result of the union had it taken place. It is fortunate that the affair was referred to me, who shall decide it in a manner quite different from what is customary. Had you gone to another officer, he would have adhered to the usual track, and awarded them to one or other of the suitors; and thus the happiness of these two young women would have been

destroyed by a single stroke of his pencil.* They shall now marry neither of the parties to whom they were betrothed. I will depute persons to provide a suitable match for them. Do not suppose, that in taking this step, I am going to consult my private views, or to violate justice. On the contrary, I am adhering to the strictest reason and propriety! Wait till I have made out an adjudication, by which you will all be satisfied." He then took up his pencil, and wrote the following document.

"It appears that Siaou-kiang and his wife, having daughters, twins, of extraordinary beauty, many persons were desirous to obtain them in marriage, and each has endeavoured to effect his views in a different way. As the father and mother were at variance, and the agents of one party

* The Chinese write with a hair pencil.

endeavoured to deceive the husband, while those of the other aimed at keeping the wife in ignorance, mistakes and confusion were the consequence. There were four husbands provided for the two brides, and as the latter could not divide themselves, it was not possible for the union to take place. As the daughters appear disgusted with those whom it was intended they should marry, I have pitied their distress, and departed from what is usually considered as the proper course, for the sake of performing an act of benevolence: but at the same time, without infringing the laws for my own private views. In all contracts of marriage, the consent of both father and mother, and the intervention of negotiators, are indispensable. Now, in the case of the mother's favourites, though there have been negotiators, there was no father's consent. Were I to sanction *their* claim, it would

be a dangerous precedent. In the case of Siaou-kiang's favourites, though there was the father's consent, there were no negotiators, and were I to permit *them* to succeed, the precedent would be equally pernicious. Both cases, then, would at once violate ancient law, and modern opinion. The four suitors must seek brides elsewhere, for these two cannot be given to any of them. It is better that they should be separated now, than that, by being united, they should become miserable hereafter. Though, therefore, I do this out of compassion for the one party, it is at the same time the most beneficial course that can be pursued for the other. Nobody need again address me on the subject: this judgment is decisive."

When it was written, a crier was ordered to read it aloud; after which, every one was sent out, nor was any body permitted to

make farther remark. Persons were then despatched to those whom the judge employed as agents for procuring proper matches for the two damsels. These were ordered, in the event of succeeding in their search, to repair to the judge, who, if he approved of the persons, would permit the marriage to take place.

After continuing their search for some time, those agents brought a number of youths, who, though they were said to be suitable, did not please the judge. He therefore hit upon another expedient, and determined to chuse for the two daughters husbands according to literary merit; that they might excel in talent, as well as in personal accomplishments.

It happened that some country people had lately caught a couple of live deer, which they had presented to him, and which suited very well with his present

scheme. He issued a notice, fixing a particular day for a literary examination: and required of the competitors, that instead of writing on the outside of their essays, (as was customary,) the particulars of their age, they should state merely whether they were married, or single. He said that as the periodical examination for literary degrees was not far distant, he wished to be previously acquainted in some measure with the abilities of the Candidates, and that he had provided, as the subject of contention for the unmarried, two beautiful damsels; and for those who were already married, a brace of curious deer. Those who won the prizes would be the first literary candidates of the year.

At the place of examination there was a vacant building. The judge sent for the mother and her two daughters, to live in the upper part, and kept the deer in a place below. When the notice was once issued,

it roused the candidates in all the surrounding districts. Those, who were already married, were inspired chiefly by the desire of success, and regarded the deer as merely tokens of this. The young men who were unmarried were extremely rejoiced at having a chance of obtaining a handsome bride, together with their literary honours.

When the day of examination arrived, they exerted themselves to the utmost for the sake of obtaining so desirable a reward. When it was over, they never thought of returning home, but all remained in a body on the spot, for the sake of hearing the decision.

After three days, a list was published, in which about ten persons from each district appeared selected for re-examination. Those who were thus chosen suspected, that this second examination was not so much to determine their literary merit, as to as-

certain their personal appearance, and such of them as were good looking began to entertain great hopes. When the appointed day arrived, they dressed and adorned themselves with scrupulous nicety, and when they appeared before the judge, assumed their best looks, with a hope that he might be pleased with their appearance and place them at the head of the candidates.

The judge was as able to distinguish between their respective personal qualifications, as their abilities and knowledge: and being desirous of ascertaining the first, he made his remarks upon them when their names were called over. He observed whether their appearance denoted persons of respectability and wealth, or otherwise. When the examination was concluded, he desired his officer, before he had come out to his audience hall, next morning, to collect the musicians, and proceeding to the place

where the two females and the deer were stationed, to conduct them to his office. The deer were to be placed on one side of the hall; and the two ladies, seated in ornamented sedans, used at weddings, were to be stationed on the other. The flowered lanterns and the music were to be in readiness to proceed to the marriage.

When his orders were given, the judge returned to his house to examine the essays. At daylight the next morning he issued a list, containing the names of the four successful candidates, the two married, and the two bachelors. The rest, ranged according to their merits, were to have inferior marks of distinction conferred upon them.

There is no occasion to notice the two who obtained the deer as their rewards, and therefore we shall not mention their names. Of the two who won the ladies,

one was a graduate, named Sze-tsin, and the other a younger candidate, whose name was Chy-yuen.

All those whose names had been noticed at the examination, entered the Hall of Audience to learn the result. When they observed on which side the two ladies were, they all crowded thither to see the damsels whose beauty was so famous; and that part of the hall was filled with spectators. On the side where the deer were stationed, a single person only, in the dress of a graduate, stood, apparently in sorrow, and without a desire to go and behold the two beauties. Some of those in the hall, who observed him, said that this must be one of the successful candidates who was married, and who knowing that neither of the ladies would come to his share, but that he had obtained one of the deer, had previously come to make his selection, that he might

take the best when the time for chusing arrived.

To the surprise of these persons, however, some of the candidates from the other side of the hall went over to him, and paying their respects, said, "We congratulate you, sir; one of these fair ladies is yours." That graduate however waved his hand in token of denial, and said, "I have nothing to do with them." They all exclaimed, "You are the first of the four successful competitors, and are also unmarried. How then can you say that you have nothing to do with them?" He answered, "We shall soon see the judge, and you will then be informed." They could not understand his meaning, but supposed that these words were nothing more than a little modesty on his part.

When the drum had been struck three times, the judge came into his hall, and

those whose names had been distinguished went to pay him their respects. He then asked, "Which are the four successful candidates? I request them to stand aside, that I may address them." When his officer heard this, he read aloud the list. Besides Sze-tsin, there should have appeared three others; but two only were present, both of whom were married, and the absent one was the unmarried candidate.

The judge upon this exclaimed, "How happens it, that on such an occasion as the present, he is not here?" Sze-tsin replied, "He is a friend of mine, and lives in the same district. Not being aware of the business of to-day, he has not come." The judge said, "Is this the graduate Sze-tsin? Sir, I have admired your abilities and learning. There could be no doubt of your succeeding at the present examination. These two ladies are certainly very

beautiful, and their having obtained two such husbands is a just dispensation of Heaven." Sze-tsin bowed at this, and answered, "Your worship is very gracious; but I am a man of an infelicitous destiny, and unworthy to enjoy such great good. I request you will select a substitute in my room; for I am unwilling to mar the happiness of my intended bride." The judge exclaimed, "How is this! What is the reason of your thus strangely declining? Tell the officer to ask the two ladies which of them is the eldest, and request her to come to her husband."

Sze-tsin again bowed, and stopping the officer, requested that he would not go. The judge said, "What is the reason of this?" Sze-tsin replied, "It is my unhappy fate to be condemned to celibacy, as I am never to be paired with a wife. All those to whom I have made overtures

of marriage, no sooner were they engaged to me, than they became seized with a mortal sickness and died; and in this manner, by the time I was twenty, I had been the innocent cause of the death of six different ladies. All the fortune-tellers whom I have consulted, say that I am never to have a wife, and that I ought therefore to become a priest of the religion of either Fŏ or Taou. Although now of the literary order, I must soon forsake letters, and become a priest. I will not venture again to hazard the life of any young woman, and thereby add to the list of my sins." The judge, having heard him, replied, "Why should you do thus? There is little faith to be put in such predictions. They were but unskilful diviners who told you this, and if you have been unfortunate in your former addresses, it must have been by mere chance. Why should you behave like a man who has a

stoppage at the throat, and cannot eat? Though you seem bent upon your resolution, I will not consent to it. I have, however, one thing to observe: how happens it that the candidate Chy-yuen is not present? In the first place, I had chosen an auspicious day, on purpose that he might come and be married; and secondly, as the hand-writing of his second essay did not correspond with that of his first, I wished to question him a little on the subject. What is the meaning of his non-arrival?"

Sze-tsin, hearing this, answered, "I am possessed of a secret, which by right I should not have divulged; but since your worship has said thus much, it might be still more culpable in me to conceal it. This candidate is a particular friend of mine. As he was very poor, and had not wherewithal to wed, I formed an intention of assisting him. The two essays were both

of my composition. The first was in his hand-writing, but the second, because he did not come, was written by me for him. I resolved, that should the first place be allotted to myself, I would yield up the prize to him; but did not expect, that by very extraordinary luck, we should both of us have been preferred. Since your worship has, through your great penetration, discovered the truth, my endeavour to serve my friend has turned out very much to his prejudice. I therefore am now compelled to entreat your pardon in his behalf, and to request, that you will extend to him, by your kindness, what I meditated for him."

The judge replied, "Is this the state of the case? Had I not fortunately discovered the truth from you, a great injustice would have been done to one of the ladies. As the matter now stands, both the first and the second place are yours, and each of the

ladies belongs to you. Any one may make pretensions to riches and honours, but such beauty as they possess is not to be found every where, and none should obtain, but such as deserve them; certainly not a false pretender. Tell the officer immediately to request both the ladies to come hither, that the marriage may be concluded."

Sze-tsin obstinately and repeatedly declined, observing, "that a man whose destiny it was never to be paired with a wife, and who could not have one,—how much less possible was it for him to have two?" The judge laughed at this, and said, "What has happened to-day is in exact conformity with your fortune. To be never paired with a wife meant, that there never could be two of you. Were you to marry *one* wife, there would then be a pair, and you might fear that your destiny would oppose some obstacle; but now, since you marry *two*, there

will be one more than a pair, and this will agree very well with the prediction. It would appear from this, that such was its very intention, and therefore you need not apprehend a recurrence of your former misfortune."

When he had done speaking, the whole number of persons present expressed their approbation, saying, that the decision of the judge this day had, as it were, created a new destiny for Sze-tsin, and that the explanation he had given was admirable. They advised Sze-tsin to relinquish his pertinacity, and return thanks to the judge, with the two ladies.

Sze-tsin therefore had no alternative: he was obliged to yield. Standing up before the judge, in company with the two ladies, they all bowed down four times before their benefactor. Sze-tsin then called for

his horse, and accompanied the two ornamented sedans home.

When he was gone, the inferior rewards were distributed. All those who had witnessed the good fortune of Sze-tsin exclaimed, "that the happiness of the immortal gods was not superior to his. The regard of the judge for talent and merit had caused it all. At this examination, three only had succeeded, but the fourth was a mere pretender, and it was just that he who had helped him should have the reward."

Some time after, Sze-tsin was promoted to higher literary rank. The name of the judge became celebrated in consequence of his decision, until it reached the court, when the emperor called him to Peking, and gave him a situation in the Military Tribunal. Sze-tsin was advanced to a place in the Literary College, and continued to

live with his friend the judge on the terms of father and son.

The ancient saying is very true, that "none but the worthy can discern the worthy."

THE

THREE DEDICATED CHAMBERS:

A TALE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE.

Let observation, with extensive view,
Survey mankind from CHINA to Peru;
Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife—
Vanity of Human Wishes.

NOTE. The following Tale (for it can hardly be called a novel) has been already printed, but never yet given to the public in a regular shape. For the reasons which produced this revised Translation, see Observations, &c. (p. 12.) The story is here taken at its actual commencement, and a tedious introduction omitted. The unnecessary recurrence of Chinese names has also been avoided.

THE

THREE DEDICATED CHAMBERS.

SECTION I.

During the reign of the twelfth Emperor of the Ming dynasty, in a district of the province of Sze-chuen, there lived a rich man, who was likely in time to be still richer. This person, whose name was Tang-yo-chuen, had an immense quantity of land. Whenever he got any money, it was his delight to add to his landed possessions; but he would neither build houses, nor would he supply himself with any of the comforts or necessaries of life, beyond what was absolutely indispensable. His disposition was to enrich himself by every means in his power, and

his property increased daily, like the moon towards the full. Houses and furniture (he thought) were not only unprofitable, but there was always a fear lest the god of fire should destroy them, and they might in one moment become annihilated. If one had fine garments, there immediately came unpleasant fellows to borrow clothes. If there was plenty to eat, one soon had people claiming acquaintance, and taking their seats in quest of food. In short, there was nothing like being contented with coarse articles, for people in that case would not be seeking them.

He laid fast hold of this notion, and was determined to take care of his money. But not contented with being niggardly, he wished to assume credit to himself for it, and said that he was descended from one of the most ancient emperors, and that his ancestors were celebrated for their economy.

The father being thus parsimonious, his son was bound to obey his precepts. When people saw the avarice of the former, they observed, that there was an ancient proverb, which said, that "if a man was a great miser, he would certainly have a prodigal son." He must inevitably have a successor who would turn things upside down; so that Tang-yo-chuen's disposition to save was not likely to descend. To their surprise, however, the son imitated his father. From his earliest years he devoted himself to letters, seeking preferment by every means in his power, and soon became a scholar of the third degree. In his eating and drinking he did not seek for luxury; in his clothes he wished not for a superabundance; and in his pleasures he was very sparing. It was only on the subject of houses that he differed; for there he was not contented with economy.

Being ashamed of the dwelling which

they now inhabited, he wished to build a better one, but was afraid to begin, lest the means should not be forthcoming. Having heard people say, "that to buy an old house was better than to build a new one," he observed, in a consultation on the subject with his father, that if they could purchase a handsome dwelling, fit for them to live in, they might then think of a garden, and build a library in it, to suit their own taste. As the father had an object* in humouring his son, he deviated on this occasion from his usual maxims. He replied, "There is no necessity to be in a hurry; we shall have a handsome house and garden in this very street. The house is not yet completed, but the day of its being finished

* When a man in China attains to high literary rank, certain honours are conferred on his *father*. A Hong merchant at Canton, whose son was a member of the Imperial College, had the privilege of erecting certain poles or masts in his grounds, indicative of the favour of the emperor.

must infallibly be the day of its sale; so let us wait a while."

The son observed in answer to this, that "when people wanted to sell houses, they did not often build; when they built houses, they did not often intend to sell them. Where, then, was the probability of this house being sold as soon as it was completed." The father replied, "Pray where did you get that crochet? If a man possesses ten thousand pieces of money, he may build a house which costs him only one thousand: but if his possessions in houses equal one half of his whole fortune, he may be compared to a large tree without a root, which must inevitably be blown down when the wind comes. Then how much more may this fellow, who, without possessing an hundred acres in land, builds all at once a house with a thousand rooms, be called a tree without a root! He will not

wait for the wind's blowing, but will tumble down of himself. There cannot be a doubt about it.'

When the son had heard this reasoning, he agreed with his father. He went about seeking for land, and said nothing more concerning houses. He was impatient, however, that the abovementioned house should be built, in order that, the present owner being gone, the finishing stroke might be given by himself. The rich man's plan proved successful: the result justified his prediction. There are two lines of the Book of Odes which are applicable to the case.

"The nest one bird constructs with anxious toil,
Ere long another seizes as her spoil."

He who was building the mansion was named Yu-soo-chin. He delighted in amusing himself with books of poetry, and

fancy, but did not seek eminence as a scholar. From the indolence of his disposition, he had a great aversion from any office, and was not born to be a mandarin. He therefore detached his thoughts from a great name, and gave himself entirely up to odes and wine; by which means he could not but be reduced to beggary.

During his whole life he had scarcely any other delight than in arranging and building gardens and summer-houses. From the beginning of the year to the end, not a day passed without his doing something in this way. He was desirous that the place about which he was now engaged, should be quite perfect, and superior to the common order of things. He said, "Let other men have their numerous acres: ostentation and riches were the concerns of others: on him they had no influence." There were only three things in which he really felt in-

terested, and which he was determined to have of the best. These were, the house which he inhabited in the day, the bed in which he slept at night, and the coffin which was to contain him when dead. Having these ideas in his breast,* he went on with his work; and laboured at it in an indefatigable manner.

Tang-yo-chuen's son, having waited several years without seeing him come to a conclusion, began to feel somewhat vexed and irritated, and said to his father, "Why have we delayed in vain for such a length of time? That man's house is not yet finished, nor is his money yet expended. It would seem from this, that he is a fellow of ways and means; and the point of his selling it hereafter appears to be somewhat

* The Chinese suppose that the abdomen is the seat of ideas.

doubtful." To this Tang-yo-chuen replied, "Every day later makes it a day more certain, and each succeeding day will make it more advantageous for us. There is no occasion for you to fret about it. The reason why his house is not finished, is simply this. When any part is completed, it does not suit his ideas of perfection, and he must take it to pieces to build over again. If it is excellent, he seeks for still higher excellence; so that of every day, during which it is delayed, the alterations and improvements are wholly for our own advantage. The reason why his resources are not yet expended, is the willingness of the usurers and the workmen to give him credit, as long as he goes on building. The labourers do not sue him for their claims, because they fancy that by every additional day of work, they may get a day's wages; while, if they were to press him

hard, he would certainly stop the building for a while, and they would get no employment. It is thus that his money is not yet expended; but this may be called 'taking flesh to feed an ulcer.' Do not be afraid that he is possessed of ways and means. Having arrived at the period when he can draw together no more, those who have him in their books will certainly press him in a body, and begin to curse him. He will then seek, in the first place, to sell what he has in land: but as that will not suffice to pay them, he must inevitably have recourse to his house. If he begins to collect now, at an early period, and before his debts are very large, he may stay for a good price before he sells it. Our right plan will be to wait until a later day, when his debts are a little increased, and anxious to sell, he will be willing to come down with his terms. This is all exactly as we

should wish it; why, then, go and obstinately torment yourself?"

The son, when he had heard this, applauded and acquiesced in his father's sentiments. Indeed, after a few years, Yu-soo-chin's debts gradually accumulated, and his creditors came daily to his doors to claim them; and there were some who would not go away again. The house which he had so long been building, could not be completed; and he at last wanted to seek a man who would buy it.

All those who are selling houses, are differently circumstanced from the venders of lands. They must naturally desire to find out a purchaser in some neighbouring or contiguous situation; for should a person from a distance wish to buy, he will make enquiries of those in the neighbourhood. If the neighbours utter a word of disadvantage, he who before was desirous to pur-

chase, will be unwilling to do it. Not like lands, or any other property, concerning which people are less particular. Therefore in selling a house, it is certainly desirable to sell it to a neighbour.

Tang-yo-chuen was a wealthy man, and since it was as well not to trifle with him, the owner of the house of course went to offer it to him first. Both father and son, though at their hearts they greedily coveted it, merely returned for answer, "that they did not want it." They waited until he intreated them earnestly, and then went over —just to give a look. Pretending not to admire it, they observed, "that he had built it but indifferently. The apartments were not suited to a private gentleman, and the winding avenues would only impede business. The fine carved doors, when they were required to keep out thieves, would have no strength. Rooms, which

should be different, were all alike. The ground and the air were very damp. It certainly could not sell for much. The flowers and bamboo shrubberies were like plantations of mulberry and hemp. Those who came to saunter here must be served with wine and eatables. Such a place as this was fit only to be turned into a nunnery,* or a residence for the priests of Fo. If one wished to make family apartments for one's children, it would never answer."

Yu-soo-chin might be said to have spent his heart's blood upon it, and when he perceived that it met with nothing but disapprobation and contempt, was not altogether pleased. However, since this man was the

* There are receptacles in China for the religious of both sexes, who devote themselves to celibacy. The strange and unaccountable resemblance, which many of the leading tenets of the religion of Fo bear to those of the Roman Catholic church, led the Jesuits to assert, that the devil had invented them in spite.

only person who was likely to buy the house, it was as well not to quarrel with him.

The people present advised Tang-yo-chuen not to say too much against it. The price was not altogether high; and even though he took it to pieces, and built it over again, it would pay for the workmen and their maintenance. The father and son of course praised and dispraised it, still they brought it down to an exceeding low price: not above one fifth of its real value.

Yu-soo-chin had no alternative, and must endure the pain of selling it. Every thing was delivered over in the bonds, with the exception of one set of apartments, which had occupied his whole life, and which he had brought exactly to suit his own taste. These he would not insert in the deeds, but wished to build a partition wall, and make a separate entrance, that he might inhabit them until his death.

The son was for decidedly compelling him to sell the whole together, in order that it might be complete. His father seemed to agree with the rest of the people. Screwing up his mouth, he exclaimed, "Let him sell it or not, as he pleases: it is a pity to force him. He merely wishes to keep this small shred,* that it may be the means of his recovering the property hereafter, when he has improved his circumstances. It will then revert to its original master, which will be a very good thing." When the people present heard this, they all said it was the speech of a benevolent man. They little knew that it was far otherwise; that it was altogether the language of contempt!

* There is some law existing in China, that if a man in selling his property, retain but a small portion of it, he is entitled to receive back the whole, if hereafter his improved circumstances will allow of his redeeming it. This observation may serve to explain his motive in wishing to retain this shred.

He concluded that it could never be recovered, and therefore left him this shred. Indeed it was quite useless, and the whole must inevitably become one house, sooner or later. They listened to his requisition, and entirely acquiescing with him in words, they divided the property, of which the new owner obtained nine parts, and the old possessor one.

The apartments, which Yu-soo-chin retained, were in the style of a Pagoda, consisting altogether of three stories. In each chamber was a tablet, written upon by some person of rank and eminence, with whom he was acquainted. In the lowest room were carved lattices, crooked railings, bamboo seats, and flower stands. It was the place where he received his guests. On the tablet were inscribed large characters to this effect,

DEDICATED TO MEN.

The chamber in the middle story was adorned with bright tables and clear windows, together with pictures and other furniture. This was his study, where he was accustomed to read and write. On the tablet was largely inscribed,

DEDICATED TO THE ANCIENTS.

The highest chamber was empty and light. There was nothing in it, besides a chafing dish for incense, and a sacred book. It was here that he retreated from the crowd, retired from noise, and shut himself up in complete solitude. On the front of the tablet in this chamber was written, in large characters,

DEDICATED TO HEAVEN.

Having divided the building into compartments for these three different uses, he likewise took them unitedly, and formed a tablet, calling them,

THE THREE DEDICATED CHAMBERS.

Before he had parted with the rest of his property, those three appellations, though well chosen, had still been vainly applied, since he had not made use of the apartments. The lowest chamber only could be excepted, for as he was exceedingly fond of entertaining guests, and if a person came from a distance to visit him, immediately placed a bed in it, the appellation of "Dedicated to Men" was certainly applicable. As to the two upper chambers, he had hardly been in them. But now, since his summer houses were gone, besides the chamber "Dedicated to the Ancients," he had no place in which he could read or write; and except that "Dedicated to Heaven," none to which he could retire from noise, or retreat from the crowd. All the day long he sat in them, and the names which he had dictated became truly appli-

cable. He now fully understood that a great deal might be effected in a small and confined residence, and that it was better to despise the name, and adhere to the reality. These four popular lines are not inapplicable.

"Lord of ten thousand acres, flowering fair,
A few small morsels quell thy appetite;
A thousand spreading roofs demand thy care,
And lo! six feet suffice thee every night!"

The strength which he possessed had hitherto been dissipated in vain. He now applied his inventive genius collectively at a single point, and caused his dwelling to be decorated to an extraordinary degree. Residing in it, Yu-soo-chin not only forgot the misery of parting with his garden, being in fact very much relieved by the absence of that burthen, but also remained secure from a violent neighbour at his side.

How he could live unmolested in this habitation will be shewn in the next section.

SECTION II.

When Tang-yo-chuen and his son had purchased their new residence, the rich man's taste unfortunately proved quite different from that of the former owner, and he wanted to alter it once again. But there was no necessity to take it to pieces, or to change the main parts of the structure. It was like some beautiful landscape, where the only thing requisite was to add a blade of grass, or take away a tree. The appearance of it did not suit his idea of a picture. When he had worked at it for a time, he found that he had departed from his original pursuit of turning iron into

gold, and contrary to his expectation, was turning gold into iron.

The persons who came to view it, agreed in saying that "the pleasure-ground was large and unsuitable, and that, after all, it was not to be compared with the Three Chambers;—though if they were both united, it would be well enough. It was no wonder (they added) that the other retained the small part, and despised the large one: or that he held it tenaciously and refused to sell it. The partition turned out to be one inch of gold and ten cubits of iron."

Both the father and son, when they heard these observations, became very sorry, and repentant of the bargain: and they then learned that a man may be rich, without being altogether satisfied. They applied to the brokers, and going over to annoy their neighbour, required that he should insert the Three Chambers in the deeds,

and give the whole over to them. Yu-soo-chin, since selling the pleasure-ground, had employed no workmen, and had not been at all extravagant. As his debts were all paid, and he was short neither of money nor food, what should make him wish to sell his property? He therefore said to them in answer, "Tell me where I should repose myself, when this habitation was gone?—but I will still hold out, though you try to starve me into compliance with your demands." As his circumstances improved, he became more and more determined in his resolution.

The brokers came over, and talked on the subject with the son. The latter could not help taking his father to task, and telling him, that "Though he had been all his life studying mankind, he seemed, on this occasion, for once to have been quite mistaken." The father replied "That fel-

low may be as determined as he pleases during his life-time, but he will be very quiet when he is dead. He is now an old man, and without heirs. When the breath is out of his body, his whole household must inevitably revert to strangers, and doubtless the Three Chambers among the rest. All his property will become our own; there is no fear of its flying away up to heaven." The son, when he had heard thus far, replied, that "Though all this might be very true, yet the man's duration seemed to be without a limit; it was impossible to wait for his demise; and the sooner they obtained possession of his house, the better." From this time, they made Yu-soo-chin the chief subject of their thoughts; and though they imprecated his death heartily, they rather hoped that his ruin would anticipate that event: for they still thought that it would be impossible for

him to hold out, when his food and raiment had failed him.

Who could have conceived, that when men had such virtuous wishes, heaven would not comply with them! He continued to live on prosperously, in spite of all their hopes and imprecations. Indeed he seemed to grow stronger, as he became older. Neither was he troubled with a want of clothes, nor did his subsistence fail him; and he had no necessity to sell his Three Chambers.

Tang-yo-chuen and his son were vexed and enraged beyond measure, and after having deliberated on the next plan to be pursued, they applied to the brokers, insisting that Yu-soo-chin should redeem back what they had purchased. "Two families," said they, "cannot live in the same premises. Exalted on high in his Three Chambers, he looks down upon our

dwelling; and is able to see into our private rooms, while his own are secure from our view. This is an unequal bargain, and will never answer."

Yu-soo-chin was informed of what they said; but he knew very well that their wish to be off the bargain was all feigned, and that the real truth was, they greedily desired to get possession of the whole. He therefore repeated what he had said before, and returned a very sharp and decisive answer.

Both father and son were of course exceedingly angry, and it now only remained for them to oppress him with the Mandarin's power. They made out a document, announcing in open court their wish to undo the bargain; hoping, that by a little bribery, they might be able to buy over and manage that officer, and through his assistance obtain the whole property.

They were little aware that the person, with whom they had to deal, was incorruptible; that he had formerly been a poor and obscure scholar, and was oppressed and insulted by a wealthy man. He said to them "This is a very poor person: how then is it possible for him to redeem it? Your's is evidently a plot to ruin and devour him. You are people of property, and wish to be rich, rather than virtuous: it is my business, as a magistrate, to be virtuous, rather than rich." Then in open court, he rebuked them for a while, and tearing up the deed, turned them both out.

Yu-soo-chin had an old and very worthy friend. He was a person from a distant part of the country; and one who possessed great wealth. It was his delight to expend his riches in performing acts of kindness. Happening one day to come and converse with Yu-soo-chin, he observed that he had

sold his garden and pavilion; and heaved a deep sigh. When he found, also, that people had been plotting against him, and that he could not live unmolested even in this little nest, but might hereafter be compelled to yield it up entirely, he offered immediately to produce the money, and redeem the whole back for his friend.

The latter was a man of a most independent spirit. He would not merely avoid being indebted to another for some hundreds or thousands; but if one had offered him the smallest sum, without at the same time proving that he had a claim to it, he would have declined the acceptance. Having heard what his friend had to say, he observed, that "his warm-heartedness was all in vain, and that he was mistaken in his view of the subject. The possessions of this world were altogether transitory, and never remained for many generations in

the same family. A man might take good care of them during his life time; but there was no securing them after death. Though now (said he) you interest yourself in my cause, and would advance large sums of money to redeem a portion of my property, yet I cannot live beyond a few years, and some day hence, when I die without heirs, every brick and tile must revert to strangers. Though now, from a generous motive, you are willing to make light of your money, I am afraid you cannot assist me hereafter. Though now, alas! you may redeem for me my former possessions, wait till a little while hence, and you cannot be of any service to my ghost!" The friend, perceiving this to be his mode of thinking, was unwilling to press him farther.

He lodged with Yu-soo-chin for several nights in the Three Chambers, and when he took leave on his return home, addressed

him thus, previous to commencing his journey. "While I was reposing at night in the lowest chamber, I observed a white rat, which ran about for a while, and then quickly darted into the floor. This circumstance is, no doubt, indicative of some wealth being concealed there. Do not on any account part with this house, for you may chance hereafter to dig up some treasure; at least such is my idea." Yu-soo-chin laughed at this as a mere joke, and having thanked his friend, they separated.

The old saying, that "No unlooked for wealth ever fell to him, who was destined to be poor," is a very true one. The purchasers of houses are the only people who dig up hidden treasures; no seller of his property ever yet found a single brass coin in his own ground. Yu-soo-chin knew this, and was too wise to entertain any such

visions. He therefore replied to his friend's observation with a cold laugh, and did not begin to rout up the bricks and dig the earth.

Tang-yo-chuen and his son, since they had experienced the Mandarin's wrath, were as much abashed, as they had before been vexed and angry. However, they were more busy than ever with their plots; and lived in hope that their neighbour would soon die; that he would soon become a childless ghost; for they might then enter his house with a good face.

Who could have conceived, that when a rich man had been right in all his conjectures, there should still be the two circumstances of life and death, which would not acknowledge his controul! Their neighbour not only contined to live on, but when he had arrived at upwards of sixty years, seemed to grow young again, and was

fortunate enough to have a son born to him.

The Three Chambers were immediately crowded with congratulatory guests, who all exclaimed, that "now the whole property must be redeemed!" Tang-yo-chúen and his son, when they heard of the unlucky event, were very much disturbed. They were before only afraid of not obtaining the remaining portion, but their apprehension now was, that they should lose the whole:—and they were anxious beyond measure on the subject.

After the lapse of a month, several brokers came to them unexpectedly, saying, that their neighbour, after the birth of his son, had been reduced to poverty by his guests, who had completely eaten him up. He had now no other means of subsistence left, than to sell the house in which he was living. The cards of sale were already

issued, and the bills pasted on the doors! They ought to seize this opportunity, and pounce upon it as quickly as possible."

On hearing this, both father and son were transported with joy; which was only allayed by the fear, that he would remember and hate them for past circumstances; chusing to sell it to some other person, in preference to having any dealings with them.

They were not aware, that his way of thinking was quite different from their own! "The descendants of our two families (said he) are peculiarly circumstanced with respect to one another. His remote ancestor conferred the Empire on mine, who had nothing to give in return. Now, since the obligation has descended to the posterity, it would be nothing more than what was right, were I to give him this small property as a present; I may surely, then, let him

have it for a price. I will not, for the little resentments of these days, obliterate the memory of former favours. Let him not be anxious on the subject, but trust to me to fix a moderate price for it, and deliver it over into his possession."

Tang-yo-chuen, when he heard of this, was happy beyond measure; as was also his son. The former said, "I always delighted in dwelling on my ancestors, and have ever experienced their favourable influence. Had it not been for their ancient generosity, I should never have obtained this elegant residence. It is thus that men may rejoice in having had virtuous forefathers." He then went over with the brokers, and settled the bargain. Though his disposition had always been to seek for an advantage on such occasions, yet since old things had been brought forward, he was willing for once to practise a little liberality.

His neighbour, on the other hand, did not higgle about it, but imitated the generosity of Tang-yo-chuen's ancestor, who had given up his throne and his kingdom, and sought some thatched cottage, where he might live in retirement.

There were a few honest friends, who could not bring themselves to justify Yu-soo-chin. They said to him, "When you had your house, why did you not sell it to any body rather than to him who envied and plotted against you? He has now succeeded, and both the father and son will go about to every one, chattering and exulting. As long as you were without an heir, you would not abate in your resentment. Since you were so fortunate as to obtain one, he might have proved the means of recovering back the whole property; and even though you had not recovered it, that which remained to you was sufficient.

Why then did you deliver over the last remnant of your possessions to that man?"

Yu-soo-chin, having heard what they had to say, smiled, and replied, "Your intentions, gentlemen, are very good; but you regard merely what is before your eyes, without considering the hereafter: I judge that his plots will eventually benefit me. In order to redeem back the whole property, I must have waited until my son was grown up, when it might have been possible to recover it. But I am an old man, and conceive that I cannot live so long; and who can tell, whether, after my death, my son would not have sold the Three Chambers to Tang-yo-chuen? Having at length succeeded in getting it from the son, he would have laughed at, and abused the memory of the father. It is better that the father should sell the property, and then people will compassionate and assist the son.

"The above, however, might not have been the worst evil. It is ten thousand to one, that I should very soon have died, while my son was yet an infant. My wife, being content to strive with hunger, would not have parted with the property to our enemy. He, seeing that the new would not come into his hands, and fearing, also, that the old might be redeemed, would certainly have laid plots to cut off my heir. Thus I am fearful, that not only the property would have been lost, but my son sacrificed besides. This indeed might be called a loss! By selling it cheap to him now, I have merely made a kind of deposit; and caused him to incur a debt, which will be paid into the hands of my son. If he does not pay it, I think it possible that others will. The old proverb says, 'To endure injuries is the sure policy.'"

When they had heard this, his friends,

though they were somewhat startled by his reasons, still maintained their former opinion. The old man died suddenly, a very few years after he had sold his whole property, and left his son, a child, under the protection of his widow, who possessed scarcely any thing. Their sole reliance was on the price which had been obtained for the house, and which produced a little interest, just enough to subsist upon. Tang-yo-chuen's possessions became every day greater. He knew how to make money, and his son knew how to take care of it. Every thing came in; nothing went out; and the property which he had bought seemed so secure, that it might last for a thousand years.

Every one arraigned the wisdom of Heaven, saying, that "the descendants of those persons, who had been liberal and just, possessed little or nothing; while the

progeny of those, who had enriched themselves by unworthy means, were so well off." The saying of the ancients, however, is very true, that "when virtue and vice have arrived at their full, they must finally be recompensed; the only difference being, whether sooner or later." These words are constantly in men's mouths, but leave very little impression on their hearts. Though the recompense come late, it is the same thing as if it came early; and indeed his lot, who waits for his punishment, is the worst.

The subject of late or early recompenses very much resembles laying out money, and receiving back the interest. If you receive it one day sooner, you receive one day's less interest: if you leave it for a year longer, you get a year's additional interest. Should you look for the reward of your good deeds with an anxious heart, Heaven

may not immediately send it, and it may seem as if no reward awaited you. But when you have lost all expectation, and given up the hope, the recompense will suddenly arrive; like a bad debt of many years' standing, which, when the lender has forgotten it, comes unexpectedly to his door, with an exceeding large accumulation of interest. This is far better than an early payment.

When Yu-soo-chin's son, who was called Ke-woo, had reached the age of seventeen or eighteen, he soon acquired a literary title. He was created governor of a district, and being called to court, was afterwards raised to a still higher office. As he was a person who dared to speak in the cause of rectitude, he became a great favourite with the reigning Emperor.

At length, when his mother became old, he requested leave to retire and take care

of her. Making the best of his way home, and being as yet some miles from it, he perceived a woman, not much more than twenty, with a paper in her hand, kneeling by the way side, and exclaiming to him aloud, "I intreat, sir, that you will receive and examine this." Ke-woo told her to come into the boat,* and taking the document from her, looked at it. It turned out to be a deed, or bond, in the name of her husband, who desired, with his family and effects, to come under his protection, and become his slaves.† Ke-woo, said to her,

* Almost all journeys are performed in China by water. The British Embassy of 1816, of which the translator was a member, travelled a distance of about 1200 miles, along canals and navigable rivers.

† "It is to be observed, that the slavery, which is recognized and tolerated by the laws of China, is a mild species of servitude, and perhaps not very degrading, in a country, in which no condition of life appears to admit of any considerable degree of personal liberty and independence."—*Staunton's Penal Code, p. 293, note.*

"If I may judge by your appearance, you are of a respectable family, why do you wish to throw yourselves under my protection? How happens it, too, that your husband does not shew himself, instead of permitting you, a woman, to come to the road side, and cry out aloud?"

The woman replied, "We are the descendants of an ancient family; but my father-in-law, while he lived, being very fond of buying lands, unceasingly endeavoured to add to his stock every acre of ground, and every house, which adjoined to his own. Those persons, who sold to him their property, did not part with it willingly, but each of them hated him in his heart. Before my father-in-law died, they happened, in the first place, to be favourable times, which prevented him from breaking in upon his wealth: secondly, he was a person of some rank and influence, and if

a magistrate had any charge against him, it became necessary only to spend a little money, in order to live unmolested. At length, the favourable times no longer existed, and before the expiration of half a year, my father-in-law died. My husband was young, and moreover possessed no rank. The persecutors of the orphan and widow rushed upon him in a body, and all went before the magistrate with accusations against him: so that, within a year, he experienced a great many different charges; and the larger half of his property was expended. But a still worse evil has since befallen him. He is in prison; and money alone will not release him. The only hope of his liberation rests on the zealous interference of some person of influence, and yourself are the only one to whom we can look on this occasion. Besides, sir, the business, in which my husband is involved,

has considerable relation to you; and though he seems the only person concerned, it may yet be considered as your own cause. He therefore wrote this document, and desired me to come and throw ourselves under your protection, offering to you both our property and our personal services, and only intreating, that you will not consider them as worthless, but accept of them without delay."

Ke-woo was at a loss to express his surprise on hearing the above, and asked her, "Pray what may the business be, in which you are involved, and which has so much concern with myself? Doubtless during my absence from home, my household have been getting into mischief, and in conjunction with you and your husband produced this evil. Do you wish me to identify myself with a parcel of strangers, and, by affording them my countenance

and protection, incur criminality through an unjust stretch of power?"

The woman replied, "This is by no means the case. In the midst of our property is a tall building, called 'the Three Dedicated Chambers,' which originally belonged, sir, to your family, but was afterwards sold to us. We lived there for several years without molestation; until some unknown enemy lately presented an anonymous petition, stating, 'that my husband was one of a nest of robbers, and that the three generations, from grandfather to grandson, were all rogues: that twenty pieces of treasure were now deposited under the Three Chambers, and that when the hoard was taken up, the particulars would be understood.' When the magistrate had seen this document, he quietly sent some thief-takers forward to raise up the hoard; and contrary to all expectation,

they certainly produced from under the flooring, twenty pieces of treasure. My husband was immediately apprehended, and taken to the magistrate's court. He was pointed out as a harbourer of thieves, and severely tortured and beat, with a view that he might discover his associates, together with the rest of the spoil which they might have taken.

"My husband endeavoured, as well as he could, to solve this extraordinary affair; but was unable to get at the truth. Far from having any claim to the treasure which had been discovered, he knew not whence it had flown thither. Being ignorant of every circumstance connected with it, we were unable to unravel the mystery; but might still rejoice that no one appeared to have lost it. The magistrate committed my husband to prison on suspicion, but has not yet decided on his crime. My

husband considered the subject minutely, and thought it probable, that as our house and grounds formerly belonged to your family, your grandfather might have deposited the treasure in the floor, and your father, ignorant of the circumstance, never removed it. Hence, that which should have been a profitable thing, turned out to be a source of misfortune.

"We do not wish to enquire into the truth of this point, but only intreat, sir, that you will claim the money as your own. When the money is thus disposed of, my husband will be restored from death to life, and as your interference will be the cause of this, our whole property should be presented to you in recompense. The house and grounds, which were constructed by your father with such pains and labour, have a particular claim to be restored to you, and we therefore intreat, sir, that you will not reject them."

Ke-woo, hearing this, could not help suspecting that something was wrong. He said to her in answer, "My family have made it a maxim of old, to refuse all such offers. There is no occasion to speak now about your throwing yourselves under my protection. It is true that the house and grounds were formerly possessed by my family; but they were regularly sold, with all the forms of brokers and deeds, and were not conjured away by your relations. If I want them again, therefore, I must pay the original price for them, and there is no reason why you should give them back to me for nothing. As to the treasure, I have no concern with it whatever, and cannot with any propriety lay claim to it. Go now, and wait until I have had an interview with the magistrate. I will request him to investigate the subject with care, as it is highly necessary to have a clear deci-

sion. Should the charges be proved to be untrue, your husband will of course be released from prison, and certainly will not be put to death unjustly."

When the woman had heard this, she rejoiced exceedingly, and returning him ten thousand thanks, took her departure. The source, whence these misfortunes arose, and the manner in which they were afterwards got the better of, are explained in the third and last section.

SECTION III.

Ke-woo, after his interview with the woman, made the best of his way home. He then fancied himself to be the examining magistrate, and considered the subject in different lights, saying to himself, "Not to mention that this treasure cannot be the patrimony of my ancestors, yet allowing

that it were so, how came I, their descendant, to know nothing about it, nor my kindred to contend for its possession? On the contrary, it was a person out of the family who knew of it, and who presented a petition on the subject. As this petition was without a name, it is plain that he must be an enemy;—I have no doubt about it. At the same time, supposing that he had some cause of enmity, it was not well to charge the other with such a vile act, and to point him out as a harbourer of thieves. Then, again, at the time of taking up the treasure, the petitioner's words were verified, and it answered exactly to the amount specified in the document, without being either more or less. It is difficult to conceive that he, who presented the petition, for the sake of gratifying a secret enmity, should be willing to risk such a vast sum, and having placed it in another's ground,

proceed to carry on so extraordinary a business."

He considered it for several days, but could make nothing of the matter. It was the constant subject of his thoughts, and during his sleep, and in his dreams, he cried out and muttered broken sentences. His mother, hearing him, enquired the reason of this; and he then recounted to her minutely what the woman had said to him. On first hearing it, his mother, too, was very much perplexed, but having considered it awhile, discovered the truth, and exclaimed "It must be so, indeed! This treasure does certainly belong to our family; and the man was right enough in his conjectures. When your father was alive, he had a friend who came from a distance to see him. This friend remained for several nights in the lowest of the Three Dedicated Chambers, and perceived (he said) a white

rat, which ran about for a while, and then darted into the floor. At the time of his departure, he spoke to your father, desiring him by no means to sell the apartments, since he might hereafter find some unlooked for treasure. By all appearances, this treasure has now come to light. Your father, by not searching for it, made it a cause of misfortune to others: do you, therefore, go and claim it, and thereby save the man's life."

Her son replied, "There is something more to be said on the subject. An idle story like this is not fit for the mouth of a respectable person; and when I talk about a white rat to the magistrate, he will probably suspect that I covet that large sum of money, and, unwilling to claim it openly, have trumped up this story, in order to impose upon simple people. Besides, neither was this white rat seen by my father, nor

was this foolish story related by him. The more I consider it, the more ridiculous does it appear. It may indeed be called the dream of a fool. If the treasure were the property of our family, my father should have seen those indications; or how happened it that, instead of appearing to me, they were perceived by a stranger? The whole story is false; it is impossible to believe it. Still, however, we ought to consult with the magistrate, with a view to clearing up this mysterious business, and saving a guiltless wretch. This will be acting a correct and virtuous part."

As he had done speaking, a servant suddenly announced that the magistrate had arrived, to pay his respects. Ke-woo said; "I was just now wishing to see him: request him to walk in immediately." When the magistrate had made his bow, and talked a little on general subjects, he did

not wait until Ke-woo began the subject of the mystery, but took it up himself, and requested to hear all that he knew about it, saying, that "the person in whose house the hoard had been found, although repeatedly and strictly examined, had discovered nothing. He yesterday" (said he) "made a deposition, stating, that the place where the treasure had been taken up belonged formerly to your family, and that therefore it must have been left by your ancestors. I accordingly came here, in the first place, to pay my respects, and secondly, to request your information on the subject, being quite ignorant of the truth." Ke-woo replied, "My family has for several successive generations been very poor, nor did my immediate predecessors accumulate any thing in money. It would therefore be rash in me to lay claim to this treasure, by which means I should acquire

a bad name. There must be something in this affair which we do not understand; nor is it necessary to assert that it is a hoard accumulated by a nest of thieves. I therefore entreat, sir, that you will continue a strict investigation, and effect a decision of this doubtful business. Should you be able to bring the crime home to the prisoner, then well and good."

The magistrate said, "When your father departed this life,* though you, sir, were still a child, and therefore, perhaps, not very well acquainted with former circumstances; yet may we not ask your mother if, before the property was disposed of, she either saw or heard of any thing particular?"

He replied, "I have already interrogated

* The Chinese have a superstitious dread of mentioning death in direct terms. The expression in the original is "to pass over to immortality, or become immortal."

my mother, but she talks somewhat at random, and my father never mentioned a word on the subject. As I am now conversing with you on business, it would be improper to repeat any thing unadvisedly. I will therefore keep it to myself." The magistrate insisted on his telling it out: but Ke-woo was determined to say nothing.

His mother was fortunately standing behind the screen, and wishing sincerely to do a good action, desired her steward to go and recount the story in question for his master. When the magistrate had heard it, he considered silently for a time, and then said to the steward, "I will trouble you to go in again, and ask, where is the residence of him who saw the white rat; whether he is at present alive or dead; whether his family is rich or poor; on what terms of intimacy your master lived with him; and if they were in the habit of rendering

each other mutual assistance. I have to request that your lady will speak with precision, as the present day's enquiry may serve in the place of a formal trial, and this obscure case be happily cleared up."

The steward went in for a while, and coming back, answered, "My mistress says that the person who saw the white rat came from a considerable distance, and lived in such and such a district. He is yet alive, and his fortune is very large. He is a person of great worth, who sets a small value on riches, and lived on terms of strictest friendship with my former master. Seeing that he had sold his pleasure ground, and that he would be compelled to part with his Three Chambers, he wished to produce the money, and redeem the whole for him. As my master would not consent, his friend pressed him no farther. The words in question are those which he uttered at the

period of his departure." The magistrate, having considered a little, directed the steward to go in and ask, "if, after the death of his lady's husband, the friend had come to pay honours to the deceased; and if his lady could mention any expression which she might have heard him utter."

The steward went in and returned, saying, "When my master had been dead for more than ten years, his friend came to pay honours to his memory. Seeing that the Three Chambers were sold, he was much surprised, and asked my mistress, 'Did you, after my departure, obtain that unlooked for treasure which I predicted?' She answered, that indeed they did not. He then sighed, and observed that 'it was a fine piece of good fortune for those who had bought the property. Deceitful in their hearts, and contriving plots to get

possession of the place, they had acquired wealth which they did not deserve. In a short time, however, they would experience an unlooked for calamity.' A very few days after his departure, some person brought an accusation against the prisoner, and gave rise to this business. My mistress constantly praised and admired her friend, declaring that he was one who could see into futurity."

The magistrate, having heard thus far, laughed heartily, and going towards the screen, made a low bow, saying, "Many thanks to you, madam, for your information, which has enabled me, a dull person, to make out this extraordinary affair. There is no occasion for farther enquiry. I will trouble your messenger to bring a receipt, and will immediately send the twenty pieces of treasure to your house."

Ke-woo exclaimed, "What is your rea-

son for this?—I beg, sir, that you will inform me." The magistrate replied, "These twenty pieces of treasure were neither left by your ancestors, nor were they plundered by the prisoner. The fact was just this. That worthy person wished to redeem the property for your father, but as he possessed a very independent disposition, and was tenacious in his refusal, your friend deposited the money in the floor, as the means of redeeming the property hereafter. Not wishing to declare this plainly, he pretended the agency of some spirit, with the idea, that when he was gone, your father would take up the treasure. When he came afterwards to pay honours to the deceased, observing that the pleasure ground had not been recovered, but that the Three Chambers were also sold, your friend knew that the treasure was in the hands of the enemy, and of course was vexed beyond measure,

At his departure, therefore, he presented an anonymous petition, with the intention of waiting until the family of the prisoner was broken up, and the property dismembered. As the truth is now plain, your original possessions ought to be restored to you. What have you to say against this?"

Ke-woo, though in his heart he admired him for his decision, had still an objection to claiming the treasure, from the suspicion which might be attached to himself. He did not wish to take it in too great a hurry; but making the magistrate a bow, observed, that "he had formed an excellent conclusion, and must be possessed of admirable wisdom. That though Lung-too* himself were to re-appear, he could not equal this. At the same time (said he), though you conclude this treasure must have been left by

* A famous magistrate of ancient times, who is now deified, and has temples to his memory.

our generous friend, still there are no persons to bear witness to it, and it would not be well for me to put in a claim rashly. I therefore entreat, sir, that you will keep it in your treasury, to relieve the wants of the people during famine."

While he was yet declining it, a servant came in, with a red ticket in his hand, and announced a visitor to his master in a whisper, saying, "The person of whom you have just now been talking* is arrived at the door. He says that he has come from a great distance to pay his respects to my mistress. The magistrate being present, I ought not to have announced him; but since he is acquainted with the business in question, and seems to have come at a

* This servant must have waited at the conferences. It is customary, among the Chinese, to have a great number of attendants present on all occasions of ceremony, with a view to avoid the suspicion of conspiracy.

lucky moment, I therefore acquaint you, sir, with his arrival, in case you may wish to interrogate him." Ke-woo was greatly rejoiced, and informed the magistrate. The latter was ready to dance with joy, and desired that he might be requested to enter immediately.

He was a very respectable looking old man, with a round face, and white locks. He paid his respects to his friend, but only slightly regarded the magistrate, who was a stranger to him, and making a bow, passed onward, saying, "The object of my visit was to see the wife of my deceased friend. I came not to court the rich or powerful, nor do your affairs concern me; a person from a distant part of the country. I cannot presume to intrude on you; so shew me the way into the house, that I may visit the lady."

Ke-woo answered, "As my venerable

friend has come from a great distance, it is not right to treat him as a casual visitor; but since the magistrate is engaged in an affair of difficulty, and wishes to ask you some questions, and since it is a fortunate occurrence to find you here, we entreat that you will sit down for a moment."

On this he made his obeisance, and sat down. The magistrate took some tea with him, and then bowing, said, "I believe, sir, that you are the person, who, about twenty years ago, performed an act of great virtue, of which no one was then conscious, but which it has now fallen to my lot to bring to light. Were you not the author of that hidden treasure, which was left for your friend, without any other notice than by some reference to the agency of spirits?"

The old man was taken somewhat by surprise, and for a moment did not speak.

Having recovered from his embarrassment, he replied, "How should such a rustic as I perform any act of great virtue?—What can you mean, sir, by your question?"

Ke-woo answered, "Some words, respecting a white rat, were heard to proceed from your mouth. In consequence of certain suspicious appearances, they were going to impute the crime of harbouring thieves to an innocent person. As I could not bear to see this, I entreated the magistrate to set him at liberty. While we were conversing together on the subject, we by degrees got a clue to it; but being still uncertain whether the story of the white rat be true or false, we have to request a word, sir, from you to settle it."

The old man was determined in his refusal, and would not speak, until a message came from the lady of the house, begging him to give up the whole truth, in order

that an innocent person might be exculpated. He then smiled, and made a complete disclosure of the circumstances, which had been profoundly secreted in his breast for more than twenty years. They agreed to a tittle with what the magistrate had said. Having directed the people to bring the treasure, in order that they might examine the letters and marks upon its surface, all these particulars corresponded exactly.

The magistrate and Ke-woo admired the old gentleman's great virtues; Ke-woo expatiated with the old gentleman on the penetrating intellect of the magistrate; while the magistrate again, and the old gentleman, dealt out their praises on the conduct of Ke-woo, who had conferred benefits, instead of cherishing resentment. "Such actions as these," they observed, "would be hereafter talked of far and

wide: this might be predicted without the aid of divination."

They went on with their praises of each other without ceasing, and the attendants who were present, put their hands to their mouths, in order to conceal their laughter, observing, that "the magistrate had issued orders to apprehend him who had presented the anonymous petition. Having found him out, he was sitting down and conversing with him, instead of giving him a beating. This was certainly a novel proceeding!"

When the magistrate returned to his office, he sent a messenger to deliver the twenty pieces of treasure, and to procure a receipt for the same. Ke-wbo, however, would not accept it. He wrote back a letter to that officer, requesting that he would give the money over to the family of the prisoner, and redeem the property with

it. That, in the first place, this would be fulfilling the intentions of his father; secondly, it would accord with the wishes of his generous friend; and lastly, it would enable the prisoner's family to purchase some other residence. Thus, neither the givers nor the receivers would be injured in the least.

'All parties praised such unexampled generosity. The magistrate, in compliance with the words of the letter, released the prisoner from his confinement, and delivering to him the original price, received from him the two deeds, by which the property had been sold. A messenger being sent off with these, the pleasure ground, and the dwelling, were delivered into the possession of their original master.

On the same day, in the highest of the "Three Dedicated Chambers," he offered up wine, in token of gratitude to heaven,

saying, "Thus amply has my father's virtue been rewarded; thus bitter has been the recompense of Tang-yo-chuen's crimes! Oh, how is it, that men are afraid of virtue; or how is it, that they can delight in being vicious!"

Tang-yo-chuen's son and his wife made out a deed, as before, delivering up their persons, and together with the price of the property, which they had received from the magistrate, offered themselves to Kewoo, entreating that he would accept of their services for the remainder of their lives. He resolutely declined their offer, but at the same time soothed them with kind words. Then the husband and wife, having engraved a votive tablet, wishing him long life, took it home and made offerings to it. Though they could not prevail on him to receive them into his service, they still recognized him as their

master. They not only endeavoured to recompense his favours, but likewise wished people to understand that they were a part of his family, for then nobody, they thought, would venture to molest them.

With a view to the remembrance of these events, every one had by heart a stanza of verses, which admonished persons of opulence to refrain from contriving schemes for the acquisition of their neighbours' property. The lines were to this effect,

"By want compell'd, he sold his house and land,
Both house and land the purchasers return;
Thus profit ends the course by virtue plann'd,
While envious plotters their misfortunes mourn."

CHINESE MORAL.

The clear judgment of the magistrate, the disinterested generosity of the old friend, and the moderation of Ke-woo,

in living retired without cherishing resentment, are all three deserving of everlasting remembrance. Those who are magistrates, ought to make the first their example. Persons of influence, who reside in the country, ought to take a lesson of the last. Those, however, who possess great wealth, should not altogether copy the old friend, because his conduct, in presenting the anonymous petition; cannot be held up as an example. It may be observed of the actions of such generous friends in general, that very few are fit to be imitated, and that those, whose conduct can be recommended, have always been men of justice. The difference between those who are just, and those who are only generous, consists in the conduct of the one being worthy of imitation, and that of the others, not.

CHINESE PROVERBS,

&c.

" Nor do Apophthegms only serve for ornament and delight, but also for action and civil use: as being the edge tools of speech, which cut and penetrate the knots of business and affairs."—*Lord Bacon.*

" A collection of good sentences resembles a string of pearls."—*Chinese Saying.*

CHINESE PROVERBS,

&c.

1. The man of first rate excellence is virtuous *independently* of instruction: he of the middling class is so *after* instruction: the lowest order of men are vicious, *in spite* of instruction.

2. By a long journey we know a horse's strength: so length of days shews a man's heart.

3. The spontaneous gifts of Heaven are of high value; but the strength of perseverance gains the prize.

4. The generations of men follow each other, like the waves in a swollen river.

5. In the days of affluence, always think of poverty: do not let want come upon

you, and make you remember with regret the time of plenty.

(The Chinese have also the following, in complete opposition to the foregoing maxim.)

6. Let us get drunk to-day, while we have wine: the sorrows of to-morrow may be borne to-morrow.

7. To correct an evil which already exists, is not so well as to foresee and prevent it.

8. Modesty is attended with profit: arrogance brings on destruction.

9. The growth of the mulberry tree corresponds with its early bent.

10. The same tree may produce sour and sweet fruit: the same mother may have a virtuous and vicious progeny.

11. It is equally criminal in the governor, and the governed, to violate the laws.

12. As the scream of the eagle is heard

when she has passed over; so a man's name remains after his death.

13. Questions of right and wrong (with reference to men's characters) are every day arising: if not listened to, they die away of themselves.

14. Doubt and distraction are on earth: the brightness of truth in heaven.

15. In learning, age and youth go for nothing: the best informed takes the precedence.

16. Against open crimes, punishments can oppose a barrier: but secret offences it is difficult for the laws to reach.

17. If there be no faith in our words, of what use are they?

18. If there be a want of concord among members of the same family, other men will take advantage of it to injure them.

19. The world's unfavourable views of conduct and character are but as the float-

ing clouds, from which the brightest day is not free.

20. Wine and good dinners make abundance of friends; but in the time of adversity, not one is to be found.

21. Let every man sweep the snow from before his own doors, and not trouble himself about the frost on his neighbour's tiles.

22. He who can suppress a moment's anger, may prevent many days' sorrow.

23. The human relations are *five in number, but that of husband and wife is the first in rank: the great ceremonies (or rites) amount to three thousand, but that of marriage is the most important.

24. Worldly fame and pleasure are destructive to the virtue of the mind; anxious thoughts and apprehensions are injurious to the health of the body.

* Viz. Husband and wife, parent and child, brothers, prince and minister, friends.

25. In a field of melons, do not pull up your shoe: under a plum-tree, do not adjust your cap, (i. e. be very careful of your conduct under circumstances of suspicion.)

26. The man of worth is really great, without being proud; the mean man is proud, without being really great.

27. Time flies like an arrow: days and months like a weaver's shuttle.

28. It is said in the *Ye-king*, that "Of those men, whose talent is inconsiderable, while their station is eminent, and of those, whose knowledge is small, while their schemes are large,—there are few who do not become miserable.

29. When a man obtains a large sum, without having earned it, if it does not make him very happy, it will certainly make him very unhappy.

30. Though a man may be utterly stupid, he is very perspicacious while reprehending

the bad actions of others; though he may be very intelligent, he is dull enough, while excusing his own faults. Do you only correct yourself on the same principle that you correct others, and excuse others on the same principle that you excuse yourself.

31. The figure of men in ancient times resembled that of wild beasts,* but their hearts contained the most perfect virtue. The outward appearance of the present race of men is human, but their dispositions are utterly brutish.

32. Do not anxiously expect what is

* The absurd fables, related in the Chinese books of ancient history, tell very much against their fidelity, and afford a strong antidote to the implicit belief, with which the Jesuitical accounts of Chinese antiquity have been listened to. In fact, their most ancient historical work extant, (the *Chun-tsew* of Confucius) is not older than the history of Herodotus, and *not so old* as Homer's Poems.

not yet come; do not vainly regret what is already past.

33. Men's passions are like water. When water has once flowed over, it cannot easily be restored; when the passions have once been indulged, they cannot easily be restrained. Water must be kept in by dykes, the passions must be regulated by the laws of propriety.

34. Without ascending the mountain, we cannot admire the height of heaven; without descending into the valley, we cannot admire the depth of the earth; without listening to the maxims left by the ancient Kings, we cannot know the excellence of wisdom.

35. In making a candle, we seek for light; in studying a book, we seek for reason: light, to illuminate a dark chamber; reason, to enlighten man's heart.

36. By learning, the sons of the common

people become public ministers; without learning, the sons of public ministers become mingled with the mass of the people.

37. Though an affair may be easily accomplished, if it is not attended to, it will never be completed: though your son may be well-disposed, if he is not instructed, he will still remain ignorant.

38. If you love your son, be liberal in punishment; if you hate your son, accustom him to dainties.

39. Past events are as clear as a mirror; the future, as obscure as varnish.

40. What exists in the morning, we cannot be certain of in the evening; what exists in the evening, we cannot calculate upon for the next morning. The fortunes of men are as variable as the winds and clouds of heaven.

41. When you are happier than usual, you should be prepared against some great

misfortune. Where joy is extreme, it precedes grief. Having obtained the Imperial favour, you should think of disgrace; living in quiet, you should think of danger. When your glory is complete, your disgrace will be the greater; when your success is great, your ruin will be the deeper.*

42. In security, do not forget danger: in times of public tranquillity, be prepared against anarchy.

43. The fishes, though deep in the water, may be hooked; the birds, though high in the air, may be shot; but man's secret thoughts are out of our reach. The heavens may be measured, the earth may be surveyed; the heart of man only is not to be known.

* "Qui nimios optabat honores,
Et nimias poscebat opes, numerosa parabat
Excelsæ turris tabulata, unde altior esset
Casus, et impulsæ præceps immane ruinæ."
JUVENAL, *Sat.* x. 104.

44. Riches are what the man of worth considers lightly; death is what the mean man deems of importance.

45. When the man of a naturally good propensity has much wealth, it injures his advancement in wisdom: when the worthless man has much wealth, it increases his faults.

46. In enacting laws, rigour is indispensable; in executing them, mercy.

47. Do not consider any vice as trivial, and therefore practise it: do not consider any virtue as unimportant, and therefore neglect it.

48. Following virtue is like ascending a steep: following vice, like rushing down a precipice.

49. All events are separately fated before they happen. Floating on the stream of life, it is in vain that we torment ourselves. Nothing proceeds from the machinations

of men, but the whole of our lives is planned by destiny.

50. A vicious wife, and an untoward son, no laws can govern.

51. He who tells me of my faults, is my instructor: he who tells me of my virtues, does me harm.

52. Let your words be few, and your companions select: thus you will escape remorse and repentance; thus you will avoid sorrow and shame.

53. If a man's wishes be few, his health will be flourishing: if he has many anxious thoughts, his constitution will decay.

54. Honours come by diligence: riches spring from economy.

55. The mild and gentle must ultimately profit themselves: the violent and fierce must bring down misfortune.

56. If you wish to know what most

engages a man's thoughts, you have only to listen to his conversation.

57. In our actions, we should accord with the will of heaven: in our words, we should consult the feelings of men.

58. If a man be not enlightened within, what lamp shall he light? if his intentions be not upright, what prayers shall he repeat?

59. Man perishes in the pursuit of wealth; as the bird meets with destruction in search of its food.

60. Knowing what is right without practising it, denotes a want of proper resolution.

61. There are plenty of men in the world, but very few heroes.*

62. Poverty and ruin must in the end be proportioned to a man's wickedness and craft; for these are qualities which heaven

* Like the army of Xerxes, Πολλοὶ μὲν ἄνθρωποι—ὀλιγοι δὲ ἀνδρες.

will not suffer to prevail. Were riches and honours the proper results of crafty villainy, the better part of the world must fatten on the winds.

63. The best cure for drunkenness is, whilst sober, to observe a drunken man.

64. The opening flower blooms alike in all places: the moon sheds an equal radiance on every mountain and every river. Evil exists only in the heart of man; all other things shew the benevolence of heaven towards the human race.

65. Would you know the character of the Prince, examine his ministers; would you understand the disposition of any man, look at his companions; would you know that of a father, observe his son.

66. A man is as ignorant of his own failings, as the ox is unconscious of his great strength.

67. A man, by the cultivation of virtue,

consults his own interest: his stores of wisdom and reflexion are every day filling up.

68. Confucius says, "The capacity for knowledge, of the inferior man, is small, and easily filled up: the intelligence of the superior man is deep, and not easily satisfied."

69. Though the screen be torn, its frame is still preserved: though the good man be plunged in want, his virtue still remains to him.

70. Without the wisdom of the learned, the clown could not be governed; without the labour of the clown, the learned could not be fed.

71. The cure of ignorance is study,—as meat is that of hunger.

72. Though the white gem be cast into the dirt, its purity cannot be (lastingly) sullied: though the good man live in a vile

place, his heart cannot be depraved. As the fir and the cypress withstand the rigours of the winter, so resplendent wisdom is safe in situations of difficulty and danger.

73. It is not easy to stop the fire, when the water is at a distance: friends at hand, are better than relations afar off.

74. If a man wish to attain to the excellence of superior beings, let him first cultivate the virtues of humanity; for if not perfect in human virtue, how shall he reach immortal perfection?

75. Man is born without knowledge, and when he has obtained it, very soon becomes old: when his experience is ripe, death suddenly seizes him.

76. There are three great maxims to be observed by those who hold public situations; viz. to be upright,—to be circumspect,—to be diligent. Those who know

these three rules, know that by which they will ensure their own safety in office.

77. A man's prosperous, or declining condition, may be gathered from the proportion of his waking to his sleeping hours.

78. Unsullied poverty is always happy, while impure wealth brings with it many sorrows.

79. He who receives a benefit, and is not ungrateful,—as a son, will be dutiful,—as a minister, will be faithful.

80. The fame of men's good actions seldom goes beyond their own doors; but their evil deeds are carried to a thousand miles distance.

81. The sincerity of him, who assents to every thing, must be small; and he who praises you inordinately to your face, must be altogether false.

82. Petty distinctions are injurious to rectitude; quibbling words violate right reason.

83. Though powerful medicines be nauseous to the taste, they are good for the disease: though candid advice be unpleasant to the ear, it is profitable for the conduct.

84. To shew compassion towards the people, by remitting the severity of the taxes, is the virtue of the prince; and to offer up their possessions, sinking their private views in regard for the public, is the duty of the people.

85. Though the life of man be short of a hundred years, he gives himself as much pain and anxiety as if he were to live a thousand.

86. The advantages of wise institutions can be sought for, only in an inflexible observance of them.

87. If a man does not receive guests at home, he will meet with very few hosts abroad.

88. Where views and dispositions agree, the most distant will unite in friendship: where they disagree, relations themselves will soon be at enmity.

89. Without a clear mirror, a woman cannot know the state of her own face: without a true friend, a man cannot discern the errors of his own actions.

90. The evidence of others is not comparable to personal experience: nor is "I heard" so good as "I saw."

91. The three greatest misfortunes in life are, in youth to bury one's father,—at the middle age to lose one's wife,—and, being old, to have no son.

92. A virtuous woman is a source of honour to her husband: a vicious one causes him disgrace.

93. It being asked, "Supposing a widowed woman to be very poor and destitute, might she in such a case take a second

husband?"—It was answered, "This question arises merely from the fear of cold and hunger: but to be starved to death is a very small matter, compared with the loss of her respectability."

94. Those who cause divisions, in order to injure other people, are in fact preparing pitfalls for their own ruin.

95. Even the carriers of burthens may, by honesty and diligence, obtain a sufficiency. The Proverb says, "Every blade of grass has its share of the dews of Heaven:" and "Though the birds of the forest have no garners, the wide world is all before them."

96. Wisdom, and Virtue, and Benevolence, and Rectitude, without Good-breeding, are imperfect.

97. He who wishes to know the road through the mountains, must ask those who

have already trodden it. (i. e. we must look for instruction to the experienced:)

98. Rich men look forward to the years that are to come; but the poor man has time to think only of what is immediately before him.

99. It is better to believe that a man *does* possess good qualities, than to assert that he *does not*.

100. The mischiefs of fire, or water, or robbers, extend only to the body; but those of pernicious doctrines, to the mind.

101. The original tendency of man's heart is to do right: and if a due caution be observed, it will not of itself go wrong.

102. As it is impossible to please men in all things, our only care should be to satisfy our own consciences.

103. He who at once knows himself, and knows others, will triumph as often as he contends.

104. Though brothers are very near relations, the difference of fortune widely separates them.

105. Eat your three meals in the day, and look forward to sleeping at night.*

106. A man's countenance is a sufficient index of his prosperity or adversity, without asking him any questions.

107. Adversity is necessary to the developement of men's virtues.

108. It is too late to pull the rein when the horse has gained the brink of the precipice: the time for stopping the leak is passed, when the vessel is in the midst of the river.

109. The scholar is acquainted with all

* "Carpe, mortalis, mea dona lætus,
Carpe, nec plantas alias require,
Sed satur *panis*, satur et *soporis*,
Cætera sperne."

things, without the trouble of going out of doors.

110. He who advances may fight, but he who retreats may take care of himself.

111. Those who respect themselves will be honourable; but he who thinks lightly of himself will be held cheap by the world.

112. Great promises are not followed by corresponding actions.

113. It is easy to convince a wise man, but to reason with a fool is a difficult undertaking.

114. To meet with an old friend in a distant country,* may be compared to the delightfulness of rain after a long drought.

115. Speak of men's virtues as if they were your own; and of their vices, as if you were liable to their punishment.

116. Diligence is a treasure of inestima-

* Literally, "village."

ble price; and prudence is the pledge of security.

117. Mencius said, "All men concur in despising a glutton, because he gives up every thing that is valuable, for the sake of pampering what is so contemptible."

118. Him, whose words are consistent with reason, and whose actions are squared by the rule of rectitude, what man shall dare to oppose?

119. Inattention to minute actions will ultimately be prejudicial to a man's virtue.

120. To the contented, even poverty and obscurity bring happiness: while to the ambitious, wealth and honours themselves are productive of misery.

121. As the light of a single star tinges the mountains of many regions; so a single unguarded expression affects the virtue of a whole life.

122. Though a poor man should live in

the midst of a noisy market, no one will ask about him: though a rich man should bury himself among the mountains, his relations will come to him from a distance.

123. Knowledge is boundless, but the capacity of one man is limited.

124. A single hair of silk does not make a thread; one tree does not make a grove.

125. A single conversation across the table with a wiseman, is better than ten years mere study of books.

126. Prudence will carry a man all over the world; but the impetuous find every step difficult.

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